Bengaluru Monday, August 25, 2025 Pages 14 Vol 78 No 236 ₹7

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DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Plucky Pujara bids adieu to cricket

37-year-old batter played last of his 103 Tests in 2023

Page 14

Sports P.14

Maria Sharapova, Bryan brothers in Tennis Hall of Fame

State

Rajanna takes veiled dig at DKS' recital of RSS prayer P.3

World

Kyiv strikes Russia nuke plant **P.12**

Nation

Integrated air defence system tested **P.5**

Quickly

ED gets 5-day custody of MLA Puppy

A Bengaluru court on Sunday remanded Congress MLA KC Veerendra Puppy in the custody of the ED for five days. The Chitradurga legislator was arrested on August 23 from Gangtok, Sikkim, in a case related to illegal online and offline betting. He was brought to Bengaluru late Saturday night on a transit warrant and taken straightaway to the ED office in Shanthinagar from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) amid tight security.

Details on Page 3

No Pak apology for 1971 B'desh atrocities

The move by Muhammad Yunus's interim government in Dhaka to mend ties with Islamabad suffered a setback on Sunday as Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar refused to apologise for the atrocities committed by the soldiers of his country in East Pakistan in 1971. Dar said the outstanding issues between the two countries had been resolved twice, a comment rejected by his counterpart in Dhaka.

Details on Page 12

Documents of 98.2% Bihar voters received: EC

Says 8 more days left to file objections on draft poll rolls

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Election Commission on Sunday said that documents of 98.2% of voters (7.24 crore) who have submitted their enumeration forms during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) electors in Bihar have been received.

Eight more days are left for people to file claims and objections to the draft electoral rolls and submit their documents if they have not done so while filing the enumeration forms, an EC statement said.

"The claims and objections period gives an opportunity to the electors to not only rectify mistakes, if any, in the draft electoral rolls, but also submit their requisite documents which they may not have provided while submitting their enumeration forms. As per information received from the office of CEO Bihar, till date, documents of 98.2% electors have been received," it said.

"Thus, from June 24 to August 24, 2025 i.e. in 60 days...an average of about 1.64% per day (have submitted documents). There are still eight days to go till September 1 with just 1.8% electors remaining for submission of the documents," it said.

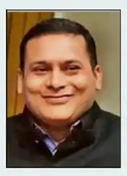
> The SIR of Bihar is on schedule. The decision on all the claims and objections received, and verification of eligibility documents is to be completed by the concerned EROs/AEROs by September 25 and after final checking, the final electoral rolls are to be published on September 30
>
> **Election Commission**

The exercise to collect their documents with the help of BLOs and volunteers is going on. Just like collection of enumeration forms, work related to collection of documents is also likely to be completed before time, it said.

It also said the verification of documents is also being done by the concerned 243 EROs and 2,976 AEROs. Out of 7.24 crore electors in the draft rolls, 0.16% claims and objections have been received so far.

▸ Bihar, Page 4

Opposition misleading on Aadhaar: BJP



The BJP on Sunday said the SC in its interim order did not suggest or direct that Aadhaar can be used as a valid document for the Bihar SIR. Stating that Aadhaar is not proof of citizenship, BJP IT Cell head Amit Malviya said the Opposition is spreading propaganda. Page 8

EC, BJP in 'partnership': Rahul

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday stepped up his campaign on alleged 'vote chori', claiming the SIR is "institutionalised theft of votes" by the EC, which has now "entered into a partnership" with the ruling BJP. Rahul also said the I.N.D.I.A bloc is "working unitedly" for the upcoming Bihar polls.

ON A HIGH

■ 19 seizures during 2020-24 | ■ 4,963 kg drugs | ■ Heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine | ■ 94.2 lakh tramadol tablets | ■ Total value Rs 11,300 cr

Drugs worth Rs 11k cr seized in Indian ports in 5 years

Out of 19 cases, 7 in Mumbai JNPA, 3 in Mundra: Govt data

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Drugs and tablets worth Rs 11,300 crore were seized in nine Indian ports, including Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai and Adani Port in Mundra, between 2020 and 2024, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed Parliament last week.

The MHA statistics tabled in the Rajya Sabha on August 20 through a written reply to questions raised by CPI MP PP Suneer showed that there were 19 instances of drug seizures during five years, with JNPA-Mumbai topping the list with seven instances. The Adani Port in Mundra witnessed three cases.

▸ Drug, Page 4

Biggest seizure (Sept 2021)
- Adani Port, Mundra
- 2,988 kg of heroin
- ₹5,976 cr value
- 3 arrested, licences of 3 brokers banned

DRUGS IN DIGITS

Year	Cases	Seizure	Value
2020	1	191 kg heroin	Rs 382 cr
2021	4	3,610 kg	Rs 8,129 cr
2022	10	1,161 kg	Rs 2,417 cr
2023	1	1 kg	Rs 5 cr
2024	3	Tramadol tablets	-

Bales of thread soaked in heroin recovered at a port

Dowry horror: UP cops shoot hubby in leg

LUCKNOW, DHNS: A man accused of setting ablaze his wife for dowry in Greater Noida was shot in his leg by police when he tried to escape custody on Sunday.

Police said the victim, Nikki, was thrashed by her husband, Vipin Bhati, and mother-in-law before they poured paint thinner over her and set her on fire. The incident happened on Thursday.

The victim's father said he had given an SUV and other household items as dowry but the in-laws had been demanding Rs 35 lakh cash.

Sources said that while in custody, Vipin tried to escape after snatching the pistol of a police official. He allegedly opened fire at the police and was shot in the leg in retaliatory firing. He was admitted to a hospital.

The victim's mother-in-law, Dayavati (55), has also been arrested.

Details on Page 9

Beer consumption set to double every 3 years in India

India's per capita beer consumption is set to double every three years thanks to a boom in craft beer sold at micro-breweries. Currently, the per capita consumption is pegged at 2 litres, and has stagnated at this level for many years. Bengaluru, hailed as the country's beer capital, will be once again leading this growth. P 10

Yatnal, Simha oppose writer Banu Mushtaq as Dasara chief guest

Expelled BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Sunday stirred a row ahead of Mysuru Dasara by opposing the government's decision to have writer Banu Mushtaq inaugurate the festival. BJP leader Pratap Simha also opposed it, saying Dasara was not a government programme but a Hindu religious event. P 4

Woman plunges to death after flyover accident

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a horrific accident, a mother of two died after being flung over a flyover near the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) shortly after Saturday midnight, police said.

The incident happened around 12.30 am. Nethravathi, 31, was riding pillion with her husband Shivu, 35, on a scooter when an unidentified car coming from the wrong side on the Bachahalli Gate flyover rammed into them and sped away.

The crash threw the couple off the scooter. Shivu landed on the right side with minor injuries, while Nethravathi was hurled off the flyover, plunging 30 feet to her death.

Their helmets were crushed, said a police officer investigating the case.

The couple—residents of Banaswadi in eastern Bengaluru—was on their way to Chikkaballapur to visit Nethravathi's mother, who had recently undergone an eye surgery at the district hospital, the officer added.

Shivu, who runs a tea shop, is undergoing treatment at a hospital. Nethravathi was a receptionist at a hotel. The couple has two children.

The Devanahalli traffic police have registered a case against the driver and are reviewing CCTV footage to track him down.

HOW IT HAPPENED
- Nethravathi and her husband Shivu leave on their scooter for Chikkaballapur
- Around 12.30 am, an unidentified car coming from the wrong side rams into the scooter on Bachahalli Gate flyover
- Shivu lands on the right side; Nethravathi is hurled off the flyover and plunges 30 feet below; she dies on the spot

Boy killed in accident near KR Market, Page 2

Dharmasthala case: YouTuber appears before cops

MANGALURU, DHNS: YouTuber Sameer MD appeared before the Belthangady police on Sunday in connection with the charges related to online content in the Dharmasthala 'mass burial' case.

YouTuber Sameer MD

The police had issued two notices asking Sameer, a resident of Ballari town, to appear before the investigation officer in connection with a suo motu case registered against him by the Dharmasthala police on July 12.

Sameer arrived at the police station along with his advocates and was questioned by Belthangady Circle Inspector Nagesh Kadri till evening. He has been asked to come for further inquiry on Monday.

The Dharmasthala police had registered a case against him for spreading false information through an AI-generated video related in the mass burial case. Sameer had uploaded a 23-minute AI video on his YouTube channel.

SI Samarth Ganigar, in his complaint to Dharmasthala police, said Sameer had made claims of thousands being raped and buried in Dharmasthala.

▸ Dharmasthala, Page 4

'Nothing wrong in NIA probe'

There is nothing wrong in handing over the Dharmasthala case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi said on Sunday. The NIA probe will unravel the larger conspiracy and bring out the truth, he added.

Details on Page 4

COUNTERING CRITICS

Soon, feel-good film on 'futuristic' B'luru infra

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Lights, camera, action!

Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd (B-SMILE) is all set to don the hat of a film producer by launching a six-minute short film to showcase the city's proposed tunnel roads and a network of elevated corridors.

Officials are betting on a well-made film to restore faith among citizens and shed light on the "futuristic and mega" development works that Bengaluru will witness over the next five years.

As per the proposal, the film will cost Rs 85 lakh. The final cut is expected to be used in digital platforms, television and presentations.

B-SMILE — an offshoot of BBMP — has proposed twin tunnel corridors (East-West and North-South) and flyovers totalling about 120 km and new roads along the buffer zones of stormwater drains. The overall cost of these works is estimated to exceed Rs 50,000 crore.

> The ground reality has not changed. We are trying to catch up with 20 years of neglect. Feel-good movies are not going to fill potholes or stop flooding. Who exactly are we trying to impress? Citizens know the reality. Let's focus on fixing the basics first
>
> **R Rajagopalan**
> convener, Bengaluru Coalition

Given the magnitude of the infrastructure works, B-SMILE wants to hire a production house to prepare a shiny film to show what's in store for Bengaluru. The film will present visuals of the existing challenges, including traffic congestion and urban flooding, and gradually transition into a futuristic portrayal of the city. By doing this, officials hope to attract investment.

The initiative, officials say, is part of a broader effort to counter the negative public sentiment around the city's infrastructure development.

"This film is designed to build awareness, inspire pride and communicate the government's commitment to transforming Bengaluru into a resilient and modern metropolis," said BS Prahallad, Director (Technical), B-SMILE.

▸ B-SMILE, Page 4

A LEGACY
BEYOND MEASURE

KHODAY L. RAMACHANDRA

YOUR VISION LAID THE FOUNDATION &
YOUR BLESSINGS CONTINUE TO GUIDE US.

FONDLY REMEMBERED BY
FAMILY, BOARD & FRIENDS.

KHODAYS

The House of Khodays

The new BBMP market. (Inset) The old one on MM Road in Cox Town.
DH PHOTOS/AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR

BBMP's new Cox Town market faces vendor ire

High rent, lack of parking big drawbacks, they say

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Vendors are unhappy with the relocation of the old BBMP market on MM Road, Cox Town, to a new complex across the road.

On August 21, the BBMP shifted vegetable vendors and meat sellers to the facility beside Sarvagnanagar Government School.

The complex has three blocks with nine shops each — half for vegetables and half for fish, chicken, and mutton.

Vendors say the market lacks parking and sanitation facilities. "We were asked to move on a day's notice when the facilities are still incomplete," one vendor said.

A chicken seller added: "There is no parking space for customers, and the Pulakeshinagar traffic police station is right opposite. If customers violate rules, they are fined immediately. For the third day, we are already facing the heat from customers."

Each shop is rented at Rs 13,000, including 18% GST, with a 3% fine for late payment. Roadside shops earlier cost Rs 850 a month. "The sudden hike in rent will burden us as we expect sales to go down. Otherwise, we are okay with the place," said Mohammed Farooq, a chicken vendor.

Vendors, who operated on the roadside for 23 years, said they were initially promised temporary space for six months in 2002, but waited over two decades for a permanent market.

BBMP's response

Snehal R, East Zonal Commissioner, BBMP, said sanitation issues would be resolved soon.

Regarding the rent, she told *DH*: "Vendors have received a better end of the deal. Items are not being sold at the same price they were 25 years ago. The rent of commercial shops of the same size is Rs 25,000 in the area. We have given it to them at a much lower rent."

Day 1 of 50% discount: Rs 4.18 crore in traffic fines collected

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) collected Rs 4.18 crore in pending traffic fines on Saturday, the first day of the 50% discount.

On August 20, the state government announced the discount on pending traffic e-challans from August 24 to September 12.

On the first day, fines from 1,48,747 cases were paid.

Violators can pay fines through the BTP's ASTraM app or the BTP website (https://btp.karnataka.gov.in/), or by visiting the nearest traffic police station or Traffic Management Centers or Karnataka-One and BangaloreOne.

The government had announced a similar discount in 2023 when citizens cleared cases worth over Rs 5.6 crore.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Graduation Ceremony: V Narayanan, MP Shyam to attend; Organised by RV College of Engineering, Poornima Palace, near RV Technical College, Mysuru Road; 10.30 am.

Sermon: 'Proshpapadi Bhagavata; Chandrashekhar Acharya to attend; Bhimanakatte Sri Raghavendra Swamy Math, Doddabommasandra, Vidyaranyapura; 6.15 pm.

CULTURAL

Drama Festival: 'Jugari Cross'; Purushottam Bilimale, Banjagere Jayaprakash to attend; Ravindra Kala Kshetra, JC Road; 5 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershowers

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	29.0°C
Minimum	21.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	74%
Sunset (Aug 25)	6:36 pm
Sunrise (Aug 26)	6:08 am
Moonrise	6:52 am
Moonset	7:25 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
Confers
NATIONAL YOUTH AWARD 2024
AWARD OBJECTIVES :
• To motivate young persons **(aged between 15-29 years)** to achieve excellence in the field of national development or social service.
• To develop a sense of responsibility to the community as good citizens
• To give recognition to the outstanding work done by voluntary organizations working with the youth for national development and / or social service.
AWARD DESCRIPTION :
• The award shall be given for identifiable excellent work for youth in different fields of development activities and social service such as **health, research and innovation, culture, promotion of human rights, art and literature, tourism, traditional medicine, active citizenship, community service, sports and academic excellence & smart learning.**
• The number of awards - 25
• Upto 20 awards for individual category
• Upto 5 awards for youth organization category
• Individual Award- Medal, Certificate & award money of **Rs. 1,00,000/-**
• Awar d to Voluntary Youth Organizations - Medal, Certificate and award money of **Rs. 3,00,000/-**
Last date for applying : 31st August , 2025
Visit website : https://awards.gov.in/
For Eligibility, Application Format & Submission of application for National Youth Award 2024
CBC 47107/11/0007/2526

11-year-old boy dies after being hit by bus near KR Market

5th fatality involving BMTC bus this month

BENGALURU, DHNS

An 11-year-old boy was killed in a road accident involving a BMTC bus on SJP Road near KR Market on Sunday, the police said.

The boy, Shabarish, was travelling with his uncle, Sunil Kumar, when the bus struck their two-wheeler around 5.30 pm. As Shabarish fell on the left side, the bus ran him over, killing him on the spot. Kumar fell on the right side and suffered minor injuries, the police added.

Kumar, a priest at a local temple, had come to KR Market with Shabarish, the son of his deceased elder brother. The family lives in GM Palya.

BMTC STATEMENT

"A majority of such accidents occur when two-wheeler riders attempt risky overtaking manoeuvers and lose control, resulting in collisions with the rear wheels of buses.

Members of the public and traders gathered in front of the Halasuru Gate traffic police station, demanding action against the BMTC driver and justice for the boy's family.

The police took the bus driver, Santosh, and the conductor into custody for questioning.

This is the fifth fatal accident involving BMTC buses this month.

High-level meeting

Responding to the rising accidents, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) held a high-level meeting on August 22 and decided to issue daily instructions to drivers regarding accident-free driving and strict adherence to traffic rules.

It said its drivers were not at fault in three fatal accidents recorded this month, while one accident was due to passenger negligence and operational error by the e-bus driver.

"A majority of such accidents occur when two-wheeler riders attempt risky overtaking manoeuvers and lose control, resulting in collisions with the rear wheels of buses," it noted.

To address driver fatigue and pressure, the BMTC said it had revised running times on 2,000 schedules.

According to the BMTC, drivers are suspended and lose two annual increments for the first fatal accident, and are dismissed from service for the second fatal accident. In the past year, 20 drivers were suspended over 20 fatal accident cases.

NO LOVE LOST?

Unevenly piled slabs of concrete lie on what is supposed to be a footpath for pedestrians. Nothing can be more ironic than this dangerous footpath against the backdrop of an 'I love Bengaluru' sign near the Cantonment Railway Station. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

CPCB tightens online monitoring norms for polluting industries

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

With the number of highly polluting industries rising and staff shortage in pollution control boards, the Centre is pushing technological solutions for air and water monitoring.

In fresh directions to state pollution boards and Union Territories committees, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) stressed the need for industries to adopt self-monitoring mechanisms to meet prescribed standards. It emphasised the use of Online Continuous Effluent/ Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) to enforce the 'polluter pays principle' and reduce routine inspections.

OCEMS was made mandatory for 17 highly polluting industry categories in 2015. Acting on National Green Tribunal (NGT) directions, a CPCB technical committee has now revised protocols for online automated alert generation in effluent and emission monitoring.

State boards, including Karnataka, have been told to ensure strict adherence to the revised calibration and alert protocols. Hourly SMS alerts will be sent to industries when standards are exceeded. "Alerts must be based on exceedances, consistent values and connectivity status. These will be used for grading compliance," the guidelines state.

The revised protocol mandates multiple calibrations — initial, quarterly, annual, and incidental — for particulate emissions, with fortnightly checks for gaseous emissions.

For effluents, temperature and pH will be calibrated fortnightly, while biological and chemical oxygen demand will be tested monthly.

Decision welcomed

A former KSPCB scientist welcomed mandatory calibration, certified equipment, and third-party surprise visits, saying they would reduce workload.

However, sources noted that staff shortage remains a major hurdle, with 62% of sanctioned posts in the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) vacant.

"About 250 industries require monitoring. Surprise inspections are vital to enforce self-discipline, but skilled employees are essential," a source said.

BDA to e-auction 122 sites; fails to give location details

BENGALURU, DHNS: About two weeks ago, the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) had put 122 'developed' sites up for e-auction.

Even though the last day to participate in the e-auction ends on Monday, the BDA has not made public the exact locations of these sites by geo-tagging them.

This is expected to receive poor response from the public.

As per the August 11 notification, corner and intermediate sites were identified in layouts including Lingadheeranahalli, Hemmigepura, Valagerehalli, Rachanahalli, Kacharakanahalli, Kothanur, Gollahalli, UM Kaval, Thalaghattapura, BM Kaval, Anjanapura, Sompura, Gubbalala and Chalkere, among others.

After issuing the notification, the BDA usually uploads geo-tagged locations and Google Map links on its website, but has not done so this time.

Observers said that lack of information could mean fewer bidders, subdued competition and potential revenue loss for the BDA, which has lined up several development projects.

After queries from *DH*, senior BDA officials promised to immediately update the location details on the website.

Free legal aid clinic empowers city's marginalised women

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Alternative Law Forum (ALF), in collaboration with Action Aid and Slum Mahileyara Sanghatane, organised a free full-day legal aid clinic for marginalised women under its People's Law Desk initiative at Janadhikara Sampanmoola Kendra in the Anjanappa Garden slum, Cottonpet.

About 55 women from slum and working-class communities attended the camp, which offered consultations on matrimonial disputes, property issues and the challenges of securing essential documents such as caste and income certificates.

Advocate Syeda Saba from ALF highlighted the systemic barriers.

"The most important thing we are facing is that there is a difficulty to get documentation in place because the law requires them to have a specific kind of documentation available," she said. "The caste certificate cannot be made on the basis of the mother's document, but it has to be made by the father's document," often a problem when fathers have not studied.

ALF plans to hold such clinics every two to three months. "Our long-term goal is to do this in a systematic manner where we are able to do this every few months," she said.

Common legal hurdles

- Domestic violence, divorce, child custody disputes, forced abortions.
- Property ownership conflicts.
- Problems obtaining birth, death and income certificates.
- Lack of personal identification documents.
- Challenges in securing caste certificates, especially for migrants lacking school records or where husbands have not studied.

Alcoholics Anonymous celebrates 61 years in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, DHNS: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) marked its 61st anniversary on Sunday, saying its fellowship has helped over 5,000 alcoholics in Bengaluru recover from addiction.

AA holds daily meetings at 120 locations in the city, with over 3,000 members currently attending. A women's de-addiction group also functions under its banner.

An AA member, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "I have been with AA for the last 15 years and I do not touch alcohol now. The group meets every evening to discuss individual experiences of overcoming the addiction."

AA puts up posters in primary health centres and trains ASHA workers to help people fight addiction.

The Alcoholics Anonymous helpline number (98455 87507) receives 10–15 calls a day from addicts or their families seeking support.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

Thank you Infant Jesus for blessings received.Keep us blessed always.
- Nina & Family

Thanksgiving
Holy Spirit Prayer

Holy Spirit, Thou who make me see everything and shows me the way to reaching my ideals, You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and Who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be, I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory. To that end and submitting to God's holy will, I ask from You.....etc (your reqest)

END-OF-LIFE CHOICES

Living wills are legal and vital, say experts at Bengaluru death literacy festival

BENGALURU, DHNS

"Euthanasia is not legal in India, but Advance Medical Directives (AMDs) are — and more people need to know that."

This was the key message at a workshop on living wills during the first 'Death Literacy Festival' in Bengaluru on Sunday, which sought to spark conversations around end-of-life choices.

Neurologist Dr Roop Gursahani explained that an AMD allows a person, while of sound mind, to refuse treatment such as chemotherapy, dialysis, or artificial feeding in advance. This spares families the emotional burden of withdrawing treatment later.

An AMD takes effect only when the person cannot make decisions, such as in a coma or advanced dementia. It requires at least two designated healthcare representatives to uphold the patient's wishes.

Experts called it a vital tool of autonomy, ensuring one's final journey reflects personal values while easing stress for loved ones.

Dr Gursahani noted families often prolong invasive treatments for patients with irreversible conditions due to difficulty in letting go. "It is always easier emotionally and ethically to withhold rather than withdraw treatment," he said.

Many participants expressed relief at learning that they could legally avoid interventions such as ventilators or feeding tubes in cases of terminal illness or irreversible decline.

Neurologist Dr Roop Gursahani along with a team from the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy at the workshop on Sunday. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Open conversations

The panel urged open family conversations.

"Do not wait for a crisis," said Dhvani Mehta of the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy. "Document your choices now, while you are well, and ensure someone you trust can act on your behalf."

Advance Medical Directive

An Advance Medical Directive (AMD) is a legal end-of-life planning tool allowing a person to record treatment preferences, including refusal of specific interventions.

It has two parts: living will: outlines treatment choices; and Designated Healthcare Representative (DHR): a trusted person nominated to act if the individual loses capacity.

The Supreme Court has provided a nationwide framework, though awareness remains low among the public, doctors, and officials. Only Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, and Punjab have issued implementation orders, though the ruling applies across India.

Teen cyclist killed in lorry accident near Yelahanka

BENGALURU, DHNS: A teenager riding a bicycle died after being hit by a speeding tipper lorry on Kogilu Main Road near Yelahanka on Sunday.

The victim, Vijay BS (18), fell off his bicycle after the lorry struck him around 12.30 pm.

He came under the front wheels and sustained injuries to his left hand, waist, and leg.

Bystanders rushed him to Sparsh Hospital, Yelahanka, but he succumbed to injuries.

The Yelahanka traffic police arrested the driver, identified as Modeen Miya bin Jaleel Miya, and are investigating further.

6-hour power cut; Bescom work affects several areas

BENGALURU, DHNS: Several parts of Bengaluru faced power outages for over six hours on Sunday, causing inconvenience to residents.

Bescom said the disruption was due to scheduled maintenance on the 31.5 MVA power transformer 2 at the 220/66/11 KV Hoodi station.

Areas affected included Garudacharpalya, RHB Colony, Singayyanapalya, Gayathri Layout, Brindavan Layout, Hoodi Main Road, Om Shakti Layout, and Muneshwara Temple Road.

4 cops suspended over suspect's custodial death

BENGALURU, DHNS: Four policemen from the MK Doddi police station in Bengaluru South district have been suspended after a theft suspect was found dead in custody.

The suspended officers are assistant sub-inspector Nagaraju and constables Lakshminarayana, Prathap and Somanath.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is probing the case after the victim's family alleged custodial death.

The police said the deceased, Ramesh from Dundanahalli in Mandya, was arrested with his son Manju, 27, and Venkatesh, 36, of Mysuru, for stealing from a temple in Bommanayakanahalli, Channapatna.

After three days in custody, the suspects were to be produced before the court on August 20.

Around 6.45 am the same day, Ramesh went to the washroom, but did not return.

He was later found hanging from his dhoti and declared dead at the hospital.

Mysuru-Kushalnagar NH widening: Panel tells govt to get wildlife board nod

Wants to know if road's Cauvery block section is part of Nagarahole buffer

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS:

An expert committee of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has decided to give in-principle approval to the Mysuru-Kushalnagar four/six lane highway, but directed the state government to get clearance from the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL).

The government has sought approval for the diversion of 137.48 acres of forest to widen the road (NH 275) proposed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

The 92-km stretch, part of the Mysuru-Madikeri economic corridor expressway, is being developed at a cost of Rs 4,130 crore.

Members of the regional empowered committee discussed the wildlife mitigation plan approved by the chief wildlife warden of Karnataka, particularly the provisions made for the passage of animals on the proposed road in Cauvery block and in the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of the Ranganathittu bird sanctuary.

A file photo of National Highway 275 passing through Madikeri-Kushalanagar in Kodagu district.

Highway authorities informed that three animal underpasses at Ranganathittu and a bridge to connect Cauvery block had been proposed as part of the mitigation measures.

The committee said the guidelines issued by the Wildlife Institute of India should be followed and the deputy conservator of forest of the division should be consulted during the construction of the underpasses.

While the user agency said it had already submitted an application for wildlife clearance for the works in the ESZ of the bird sanctuary, the committee noted that NBWL clearance may be applicable for works near Nagarahole tiger reserve.

Of the over 137 acres sought for widening, 42 acres of forest has been transferred to the administrative control of the tiger reserve.

The committee sought to know whether the administrative control meant the area was part of the reserve's buffer zone.

While the Karnataka nodal officer said the block was not part of the buffer zone, but was only adjacent to it, the committee took note of the fact that the block functions as a buffer area.

"The (committee) is of the opinion that there is no clarity on whether the Cauvery block forms part of the buffer of Nagarahole tiger reserve or not. Thus, comments of the chief wildlife warden are required to ascertain the same," it said.

The committee decided to accord in-principle approval with specific conditions seeking clarification on the matter.

"If the said area forms part of the buffer notification of the Nagarahole tiger reserve, the state government shall submit the recommendation of the standing committee of the NBWL," it said.

Online betting case: Cong MLA in 5-day ED custody

Veerendra 'Puppy' arrested from Gangtok following raids

BENGALURU, DHNS

A Bengaluru court on Sunday remanded Congress MLA K C Veerendra 'Puppy' in the custody of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for five days.

The Chitradurga legislator was arrested on August 23 from Gangtok, Sikkim, in a money-laundering case related to illegal online and offline betting.

He was brought to Bengaluru late Saturday night on a transit warrant and taken straightaway to the ED office in Shanthinagar from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) amid tight security.

After undergoing medical tests, Puppy was produced before a judge on Sunday morning. He has been remanded in ED custody until August 28 for further interrogation.

On August 22, the ED carried out a large-scale raid at 31 locations in different parts of India, including in Gangtok, Chitradurga, Bengaluru, Hubballi, Jodhpur and Mumbai.

The searches in Goa focused on Puppy's Casino Gold, Ocean Rivers Casino, Puppy's Casino Pride, Ocean 7 Casino and Big Daddy Casino.

The ED said it had recovered Rs 12 crore in cash, including Rs 1 crore in foreign currency - bundles of 100 US Dollars, 10 and 20 British pounds, 500 Dirhams and 100 and 50 Euro notes. The agency further claimed that searches indicated a complex layering of cash and other funds.

K C Veerendra 'Puppy'

"The search has revealed that the accused is running several online betting sites in the name of King567, Raja567, etc. Further, the brother K C Thippeswamy of the accused is operating three business entities from Dubai, viz, Diamond Softech, TRS Technologies, and Prime9Technologies, related to the call centre services and gaming business of K C Veerendra 'Puppy'," the ED said in an official statement.

He was brought to Bengaluru late Saturday night on a transit warrant and taken straightaway to the ED office in Shanthinagar from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) amid tight security

ED investigators also recovered gold jewellery worth Rs 6 crore, silver articles weighing approximately 10 kg. Four vehicles were also impounded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

"Further, 17 bank accounts and two bank lockers were also frozen. Many property-related documents were also seized from the premises of the brother K C Nagaraj and his son Pruthvi N Raj. Several incriminating documents were also seized from several premises. His other associates, namely brother K C Thippeswamy, and Pruthvi N Raj, are handling operations of online gaming from Dubai. Further, it was revealed that K C Veerendra, along with his associates, had travelled to Gangtok via Bagdogra on a business visit to lease a land casino," the ED said.

NGT seeks action as states fail to disclose key info on biomedical waste treatment

BENGALURU, DHNS: India generates 719 tonnes of biomedical waste per day but a significant part of it remains untreated despite the country reporting facilities to treat 1,592 tonnes per day, prompting the National Green Tribunal to seek an explanation from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The tribunal was looking into a report filed by CPCB which showed that states either do not have adequate treatment facilities or those that have were not utilising them. Instead, as many as 17,800 healthcare facilities (HCFs) in the country resorted to burying the biomedical waste.

A principal bench of the tribunal comprising chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and expert members A Senthil Vel and Ishwar Singh noted that some of the states do not have Common Biomedical Waste Treatment Facilities (CBWTFs) and adopt the practice of burying the same.

Incidentally, the Biomedical Waste Management Rules permit 'deep burial' only in rural and remote areas where there is no access to CBWTFs. The rules also prescribed the standards for burial to reduce the impact on the environment. The CPCB counsel did not dispute that burial is a temporary measure and all biomedical waste should be treated.

CPCB scientist V P Yadav, who was present at the hearing, "could not disclose" if the board has the responsibility of ensuring compliance to the rules and if action is taken by the board or any other authority when the burial is not done as per its guidelines.

The bench noted that though it has been disclosed that facilities exist to treat 1,592 tonnes per day of biomedical waste, actual utilisation of such facilities "has not been disclosed" by the CPCB report.

Priyank, Mahadevappa invoke Ambedkar, Patel to flay RSS

Say Sangh is a 'threat to India's unity, Constitution'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Ministers Priyank Kharge and Dr H C Mahadevappa on Sunday strongly criticised the RSS in their posts on X, accusing it of being rooted in "Nazism and Manusmriti-based cruelties fuelled by communal hatred and caste hierarchy".

Priyank urged all Indians to pledge that "not even the breeze that has touched the RSS should affect us," calling this vital to building an "enlightened and prosperous India".

He described the RSS as a "poisonous organisation" and an enemy of the Constitution, unity, national flag, national anthem and the country's sovereignty.

Invoking warnings from Dr B R Ambedkar and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Priyank said their messages about RSS must be taken seriously and that followers of Manusmriti should be kept at bay.

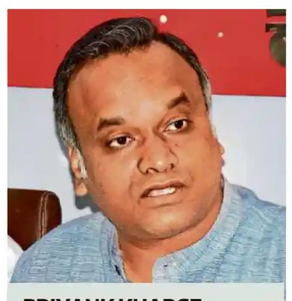
He alleged that the RSS had once allied with the British and continued "anti-unity activities" after independence. Kharge recalled Sardar Patel's 1948 ban on RSS, quoting Patel's proclamation to uproot "forces of hate and violence" threatening India's freedom and name.

Priyank accused the RSS of hypocrisy, claiming it only professed loyalty to the Constitution and flag to get the ban on it lifted, but continued anti-constitutional actions.

He challenged supporters to name even 10 positive contributions by the RSS in the past century, insisting it is a threat, not a help.

Priyank concluded that the RSS disrespects the Constitution, flag, women and marginalised communities, calling it "the supreme enemy of this country's unity".

Mahadevappa echoed Ambedkar's critique of the RSS's casteist ideology, quoting Ambedkar's criticism of those who worship animals as Gods, but deny fellow humans basic dignity. He warned that these casteist social divisions persist even today.



PRIYANK KHARGE
Minister

"RSS is a poisonous organisation and an enemy of the Constitution, unity, national flag, national anthem and the country's sovereignty.

HC Mahadevappa

DKS' recital of RSS prayer: Rajanna takes veiled dig at Cong top brass

TUMAKURU, DHNS

In a veiled attack on party leadership, senior Congress leader and Madhugiri MLA K N Rajanna said, He (D K Shivakumar) can recite RSS prayer. He can share a stage with BJP leader Amit Shah. He can do anything. But we are restrained from speaking, calling meetings or holding conventions,"

He was reacting to a query on Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D K Shivakumar singing RSS prayer on the floor of Assembly during the recently-concluded Monsoon session of state legislature.

Rajanna, who was holding the co-operation portfolio, was sacked from the Siddaramaiah Cabinet on the inaugural day of the monsoon session following the direction from the party high command over his remarks blaming the ruling Congress for alleged vote theft.

"Days after AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge said taking a dip in Triveni Sangama during Kumbh Mela won't eradicate poverty, Shivakumar visited Prayagraj and took a holy dip. Rahul Gandhi refused to attend Mukesh Ambani's son's wedding, but Shivakumar went there along with his family," Rajanna charged.

"He (DKS) can do anything and get away, but we cannot convene legislators' or ministers' meetings. We cannot speak about anything in public. I will answer this at the appropriate time," Rajanna said.

K N Rajanna

TOIL GOES WASTE

Standing crops on vast tracts of land are under water following floods in River Malaprabha near Belagal village of Hungund taluk, Bagalkot district, on Sunday. DH PHOTO

Bukkapatna chinkara sanctuary may lose glitter amid gold prospecting by private firm

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Barely five years after it was notified, Bukkapatna chinkara wildlife sanctuary seems set to face the first challenge to its existence with a company now seeking to look for gold in nearly 1,195 acres of the green patches in Bukkapatna state forest and Kurihallada kaval.

The Bukkapatna sanctuary is spread over 148.45 sq km (36,682.79 acres) of forests in Chikkanayakanahalli taluk of Tumakuru. It was notified in 2019 as an effort to protect the chinkaras' habitat in the south.

Besides chinkaras, the sanctuary is home to two other species of antelopes: black bucks and four-horned antelopes.

The Bukkapatna sanctuary is home to antelopes, leopards, sloth bears, hyenas, jackals and wild boars.

Documents show that Bengaluru-based Oro Geo Exploration India Private Limited has sought to explore gold in the Thimmanahalli gold block spread over 4,942 acres, including 1,195.17 acres in the south eastern part of Bukkapatna state forest. The company has sought permission to drill 50 boreholes to prospect for gold, after emerging as the successful bidder in the tender issued by the Mines and Geology Department in March 2023. The company has received a composite licence from the department.

"All pits and trenches will be closed properly and boreholes will be plugged using concrete. The entire land will be brought back to its original setting (as much as possible) after exploration operations," the company said in the submission made to the forest department.

Besides the antelopes and leopards, the forests of Chikkanayakanahalli taluk are home to a wide range of fauna like sloth bears, hyenas, jackals and wild boars. In July, officials recovered 300 acres of forest belonging to Bukkapatna sanctuary, following a direction by the Lokayukta.

The department recently came under fire for approving the reopening of Sarangapani mine, including mining in 119 acre of forest land as proposed by the Mineral Enterprises Private Limited. The forest department rationalised that the mining lease boundary was located outside the eco-sensitive zone of the sanctuary, which varies from 1 to 3.8 km.

A conservationist said largescale mining operations will lead to permanent degradation of the area. "No amount of barriers can prevent the pollution from the mining and allied activities. The sanctuary cannot be the price to pay for the gold," he added.

Govt spent over Rs 100 crore on K'taka summit, says data

N B HOMBAL
BENGALURU, DHNS

The four-day 2025 Global Investors' Meet – Invest Karnataka 2025 – held in Bengaluru from February 11 through February 14 cost the state government a staggering Rs 100.69 crore, a 33% increase from the money expended for the 2022 edition of the summit – Rs 74.99 crore.

Data sourced from the Department of Large and Medium Industries revealed that, of the total amount, Rs 2.12 crore was spent on rent for the venue, while advertisement, media outreach and publicity, accounted for the bulk of the expenditure, costing the state Rs 21.83 crore. However, even this expense pales in comparison to the money that the government paid for the services of the event management agency (EMA) that organised the summit.

Of the total of Rs 40 crore paid towards EMA-related services, Rs 9.89 crore was paid to the agency as fee, while additional costs accounted for a further Rs 9.49 crore. The design and fabrication of the Karnataka Pavilion cost Rs 1.48 crore, while initiatives undertaken to revamp the city for the event cumulatively cost Rs 51.54 lakh.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) outreach initiatives cost Rs 75 lakh, while Rs 5.01 lakh were spent on bid management. The inaugural dinner that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah hosted for Ambassadors, and VVIPs cost Rs 48.88 lakh, while Rs 2.72 crore was spent on third-party evaluation.

Roadshows, organised both in India and abroad, proved a huge expense. While international roadshows cost Rs 5.58 crore, roadshows in Chennai (Rs 52.13 lakh), Mumbai (Rs 64.21 lakh) and Delhi (Rs 36.36 lakh) accounted for Rs 1.52 crore. Furthermore, roadshows held in the state cost a further Rs 37.9 lakh. The costs associated with the 2022 edition were markedly less in comparison. Hosted at Palace Grounds in Bengaluru, the government paid Rs 1.27 crore in rent for the venue, while national-level promotional events only cost Rs 1.28 crore, while international ones accounted for Rs 3.28 crore. However, as against the Rs 1.52 lakh spent on postage, courier and audit fees in 2025, Rs 4.72 lakh was spent on the same in 2022.

Process to get world heritage tag for Hirebenakal may take months

Tourism dept asks INTACH to prepare a dossier

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Tourism department's persistent push to add the Hirebenakal prehistoric site at Gangavathi taluk in Koppal district to the UNESCO World Heritage Site's permanent list seems set for a long haul, as the selection process involves multiple national and international-level clearances.

The site is currently on the World Heritage Site's temporary list. During the just-concluded monsoon session of the legislature, the Tourism department displayed several pictures of rock paintings from Hirebenakal at the Vidhana Soudha. Around 65 photos (rock art, megalithic dolman, artefacts etc) will soon be displayed at Bengaluru's Venkatappa Art Gallery.

The Tourism department has commissioned the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) to prepare a dossier. Speaking to *DH*, INTACH Bengaluru chapter's convenor Meera Iyer said: "We are doing the field survey and documentation, where a team is extensively studying the megaliths and speaking to scholars and experts for different perspectives."

Meera explained that the process for including a place in the World Heritage Site's permanent list has grown more complex over the last one year. "Unlike earlier, a partial dossier is created once a place is included in the temporary list. This will include details about the site's importance, the criteria being applied, the 'outstanding universal value' of the place and so on. If UNESCO approves it, the work on the remaining part of the dossier begins."

Archaeology, Museums and Heritage Department Commissioner A Devaraju felt this process may take roughly six months and might end by early next year.

Upon UNESCO's clearance, the second part of the dossier will then be sent to the Union Ministry of Culture. Since a country can send only one recommendation per year, the ministry will scrutinise the recommendations from various states and zero in on one.

"The site selected by the Union government will then be sent to UNESCO, which will conduct a field visit and finalise. Only then can it be added to the World Heritage Site," Devaraju added.

Locally known as the 'Moryar Gudda,' the site comprises hundreds of megalithic dolmens (stone erect structures for the dead), enigmatic rock art, ash mounds, settlement marks, musical rocks and a dramatic natural landscape. The megaliths comprise 20 hectares on the hilltop, and the site is said to have a history of over 3,000 years.

Its time period is estimated to be between the New Stone Age (Neolithic Age) and the Iron Age. The place comprises over 400 megaliths and contains some of the largest rock paintings in the country.

The Hirebenakal megalithic site in Koppal district is currently on UNESCO's temporary list of world heritage sites. DH FILE PHOTO

H K PATIL
Tourism minister

"The Hirebenakal prehistoric site has long been ignored by both state and country. The rock paintings here reflect the life of those times and our government is very serious about this project. We will prepare a proper presentation and put maximum efforts to achieve this.

Nothing wrong in handing over Dharmasthala case to NIA: Minister

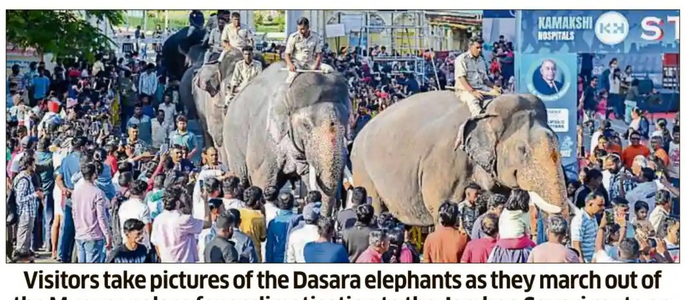
Satish Jarkiholi

YADGIR, DHNS: There is nothing wrong in handing over the Dharmasthala case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The NIA probe will unravel the larger conspiracy and bring out the truth, Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi said on Sunday.

"Leaving all their work, people of Karnataka are glued to TV and mobiles watching the Dharmasthala issue. There's a need to put an end to it. There is nothing wrong in handing over the case to NIA to probe the conspiracy angle and uncover the truth," Jarkiholi told reporters here.

"The entire episode is pertaining to a village, not the country. It (case) has nothing to do with the Congress or Right-Left groups. The government constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the alleged mass burials in Dharmasthala following a court order," he clarified.

Replying to a query on Shivakumar reciting the RSS prayer in the Assembly, Jarkiholi said, "If one can become a CM by singing the RSS prayer, then Yadgir MLA Channareddi and I will recite it. Deputy CM D K Shivakumar knows Sanskrit. He has an uncanny knack of singing Sanskrit shlokas and recited one during a debate in the Assembly."



Visitors take pictures of the Dasara elephants as they march out of the Mysuru palace for acclimatisation to the Jamboo Savari route on Sunday. DH PHOTO/ANU RAGHT

Grand welcome awaits second batch of 5 Dasara elephants in Mysuru today

MYSURU, DHNS: The second batch of five Dasara elephants will arrive at the Mysuru Palace on Monday evening. This batch will have three new elephants - Srikanta, Roopa and Hemavathi.

They will be accorded a traditional welcome by officials of Mysuru district administration, forest department and Mysuru Palace Board at 4 pm, at the Jayamarthanda gate of the palace.

The pachyderms will stay on the palace premises and undergo training along with nine other elephants which arrived in the first batch on August 4. Additional tents have been erected on the palace premises for the families of all five mahouts and five kaavadis of the second batch of elephants. Srikanta, 56, will arrive from Matthigodu camp of Nagarahole tiger reserve (NTR), along with his mahout J R Radhakrishna and kaavadi K Omkar. He was captured in Shanivarasanthe range of Hassan wildlife division in 2014.

Roopa, 44, is from the Bheemanakatte camp of NTR with her mahout Manjunatha and kaavadi Manju. She was rescued from a circus company in 2016. Hemavathi, 11, is coming from Dubare camp of Madikeri wildlife division, accompanied by her mahout Nayaz Pasha and kaavadi J N Abhil. Gopi, 42, is also coming from the Dubare camp with his mahout P B Naveen Kumar and kaavadi J R Shivu. He participates in the puja and rituals of the private Dasara celebrations of the erstwhile royal family at the palace.

Sugreeva, 43, is a Dubare camp mate of Hemavathi and Gopi. He will be taken care of by his mahout J B Shankar and kaavadi J B Raju.

Yatnal opposes inviting Banu Mushtaq to open Mysuru Dasara

Has no objection if she inaugurates festival's cultural or literary events

BENGALURU, DHNS

Expelled BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Sunday stirred fresh controversy ahead of the upcoming Mysuru Dasara celebrations by publicly opposing the state government's decision to have writer and activist Banu Mushtaq inaugurate the iconic festival.

In a strongly worded post shared on social media platform X, Yatnal raised concerns about the compatibility of Mushtaq's religious beliefs with the traditional Hindu rituals that are performed during the Dasara inauguration.

"I personally hold respect for Banu Mushtaq madam as a writer and activist. However, her inaugurating Dasara by offering flowers and lighting a lamp to the presiding deity Chamundeshwari is against her own religious beliefs," Yatnal stated in his post.

Further questioning the alignment of Mushtaq's participation with Islamic doctrines, Yatnal sought to know, "It is necessary for Madam Banu Mushtaq to clarify whether she still believes in the Islamic view that rejects idol worship and accepts monotheism by asserting one God and one scripture, or if she believes that all paths ultimately lead to the same salvation?"

Yatnal concluded by suggesting a boundary between religious and cultural roles in the state festival.

"Without such clarity, it does not appear appropriate for Banu Mushtaq madam to inaugurate Dasara. She may certainly inaugurate cultural or literary events within Dasara festivities, but the religious inauguration of Dasara itself should be refrained from," he asserted.

Former MP Pratap Simha also echoed Yatnal in his opinion.

"I respect Banu Mushtaq's contribution to the literary world. Selecting her as President of Akhila Bharatha Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in order to honour her is acceptable. But Dasara is not a government programme. It is a Hindu religious festival celebrated with devotion. It is inaugurated by offering puja to Goddess Sri Chamundeshwari Devi. Banu Mushtaq is from another faith. Does she believe in Goddess Chamundeshwari? How will she be the right person to inaugurate it," Simha questioned.

BASANAGOUDA PATIL YATNAL
MLA, Bijapur City

"I personally hold respect for Banu Mushtaq madam as a writer and activist. However, her inaugurating Dasara by offering flowers and lighting a lamp to the presiding deity Chamundeshwari is against her own religious beliefs.

Coming soon: 'Feel-good' film...

B-SMILE, from Page 1

However, not everyone is convinced by the glossy campaign plan.

R Rajagopalan, convener of Bengaluru Coalition, called it "wasteful" expenditure.

"The ground reality has not changed. We are trying to catch up with 20 years of neglect. Feel-good movies are not going to fill potholes or stop flooding. Who exactly are we trying to impress? Citizens know the reality. Let's focus on fixing the basics first," he said.

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Relentless rains: Pulses crop in four lakh hectares faces damage

SHRINIDHI R
DHARWAD, DHNS

Farmers who sowed pulses such as green gram and black gram during the kharif season are staring at heavy losses due to incessant rains.

According to estimates by the Agriculture Department, pulses grown on nearly four lakh hectares are now under threat of damage. Following early rains in mid-May, farmers in Dharwad, Belagavi, Haveri, Gadag and Bagalkot districts had taken up early sowing. With the crop now ready for harvest, untimely heavy showers have dealt a severe blow.

In Karnataka, green gram has been sown on 23.16 lakh hectares this kharif, of which nearly 70% (18 lakh hectares) is concentrated in central and north Karnataka. This makes it a major crop for districts such as Gadag, Haveri, Dharwad and parts of Belagavi and Bagalkot.

Farmers in over 14 taluks, encouraged by early rains in May, sowed green gram ahead of schedule. However, excessive rainfall in June and July damaged germinating crops across nearly two lakh hectares, forcing many farmers to switch to maize. Now, an additional four lakh hectares of green gram are waterlogged and at risk.

Black gram, sown on 11.46 lakh hectares across the state, including about four lakh hectares in central and north Karnataka, has also been hit. Officials estimate 10–15% of the black gram crop could be damaged.

"Last year too, August rains ruined the harvest and we managed barely 50% yield. The situation is no different this year. Nearly 60% of the crop is standing in water and facing damage," said Mallikarjun Hiremath, a farmer from Yadwad who has cultivated 20 acres of green gram and black gram.

Farmers in Nargund and Bagalkot raised their voice in protest, saying relentless rains had washed away their crops. They expressed anger at not receiving crop-loss compensation or insurance relief for the past two years.

Basangouda Malipatil, a farmer from Nargund, lamented successive losses.

"The crops were healthy, and we were expecting a bumper harvest. But the August rains destroyed everything. It is harvest time, yet continuous rains are preventing us from even entering the fields," he said.

Meanwhile, green gram prices have surged in APMCs, touching Rs 9,000 per quintal, with market analysts predicting further escalation if crop damage continues.

Agriculture officials noted that farmers, eyeing a second crop, had deliberately opted for early sowing of green gram this year, making the damage more painful.

In the Dharwad district alone, green gram is cultivated on one lakh hectares, with nearly 60% of farmers opting for early sowing, said Joint Director of Agriculture Manjunath Antharvalli.

"This is a crucial harvest period, but relentless rains have caused great concern," he said.

Apart from green gram and black gram, soya and maize are also reeling under the threat of rain damage.

A green gram field in Nargund taluk in Gadag district is waterlogged. DH PHOTO

MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH
Farmer from Yadwad

"Last year too, August rains ruined the harvest and we managed barely 50% yield. The situation is no different this year. Nearly 60% of the crop is standing in water and facing damage.

Rs 11k cr worth drugs seized...

Drug, from Page 1

Of these 19 cases, five are under trial while in six instances, cases have been registered. In one case, chargesheet is not yet filed while in another, a criminal complaint is filed in a court against four persons and an export company. Details of other cases are not available.

According to the MHA data, the biggest seizure was from Adani Port on September 19, 2021 when 2,988 kg of heroin worth Rs 5,976 crore was captured. Fifty-two kg of cocaine worth Rs 260 crore was also seized on 26 May, 2022, as well as 75 kg heroin worth Rs 150 crore three months later on July 11 from the Adani Port.

In 2020, there was only one case when JNPA saw the seizure of 191 kg of heroin worth Rs 382 crore.

Dharmasthala case: YouTuber...

Dharmasthala, from Page 1

The details mentioned in the video had also revealed the identity of the complainant-witness who was given protection under Witness Protection Scheme. Based on the complaint, a case was registered under several BNS sections.

On August 21, police decided to arrest Sameer after he failed to respond to summons. But Sameer obtained anticipatory bail from court the same day.

While granting anticipatory bail, the judge told Sameer not to abscond, tamper with prosecution witness. He was told to appear before the probe officer and cooperate in the investigation.

Documents of 98.2% Bihar voters received: EC

Bihar, from page 1

According to the EC, 10 claims and objections have been received from the BLAs of 12 recognised parties in Bihar, none by persons who are not voters of that Assembly Constituency and 1,21,143 by voters within their Assembly constituency.

According to official statistics, 3,28,847 new voters who have attained the age of 18 years and above on July 1 or will attain the age of 18 years and above on October 1 have also submitted their Form 6 and Declaration.

"The SIR of Bihar is on schedule. The decision on all the claims and objections received, and verification of eligibility documents is to be completed by the concerned EROs/AEROs by September 25 and after final checking, the final electoral rolls are to be published on September 30," it said.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at many places over Coastal Karnataka and at a few places over Interior Karnataka.
Forecast Aug 25: Partly cloudy sky. Light rain/ thundershowers likely.

INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	27.6	20.0	0.2
Bidar	30.2	20.0	0.0
Vijayapura	29.0	20.6	0.0
Dharwad	27.8	19.0	0.8
Haveri	26.8	20.8	0.0
Kalaburagi	30.7	21.6	0.0
Raichur	31.4	21.0	0.0
COASTAL			
Honnavar	29.6	23.5	10.7
Karwar	31.4	26.0	1.1
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	29.7	23.5	1.0

INTERIOR SOUTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	29.0
Bengaluru	27.2	20.4	1.4
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	30.1	18.6	1.5
Chikkamagaluru	--	--	--
Chitradurga	28.6	20.5	0.0
Davangere	28.0	19.5	15.2
Hassan	27.2	18.5	0.0
Mysuru	29.8	20.0	0.0
Madikeri	--	--	--
Kolar	29.6	19.3	0.0
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	28.0	26.0	NIL
Kolkata	32.0	26.0	NIL
Mumbai	27.0	26.0	NA
Chennai	34.0	28.0	NA
Pune	26.0	22.0	NA
Hyderabad	29.0	23.0	NA
Th'puram	32.0	24.0	NIL

China agreed to resume trade via Shipki-La: Himachal govt

SHIMLA, PTI: China has agreed in principle to the proposal of resuming trade through Shipki-La in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh during the recent visit of its Foreign Minister Wang Yi to India, a statement by the state government said on Sunday.

The trade was suspended in 2020 due to pandemic.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has informed the state government that the Centre had initiated discussions with China for the resumption of border trade through all three designated points- Shipki-La (Himachal Pradesh), Lipulekh (Uttarakhand) and Nathu La (Sikkim), the statement said.

"The Himachal government's consistent efforts to resume trade with China through Shipki-La (Kinnaur) have yielded encouraging results. The government of China has agreed in principle to the proposal during the recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to India," it said.

The state government has also received a positive response on resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Shipki-La, the statement said. The state government had highlighted that the Shipki-La route, connecting via Gartok towards Darchen and Mansarovar, is comparatively shorter on the Tibetan side.

YSRCP leader accuses Andhra CM of giving away TTD land

TIRUPATI, PTI: YSRCP leader B Karunakar Reddy on Sunday accused Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu of "conspiring" to hand over valuable TTD property to Oberoi Hotels.

However, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) condemned the allegations made by Reddy, calling them "incorrect and misleading".

According to Reddy, 20 acres of prime land owned by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams in Tirupati, valued at Rs 1,500 crore, was exchanged for low-value rural land, resulting in an alleged loss of Rs 1,000 crore. Reddy criticised Naidu for "gifting" a prime spot in the temple city, after previously rejecting their proposal. He demanded the reversal of the government order and urged devotees worldwide to oppose the move.

According to the temple body, in November 2021, the then (YSRCP) government allotted 20 acres at Alipiri foothills to Oberoi Hotel. On March 21, Naidu barred non-religious activities in the region located in the entire premises of the sacred seven hills, it said.

Himalayan hazard: Cloudbursts renew focus on J&K's fragile terrain

After Kishtwar & Kathua tragedies, experts underline need for better preparedness

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

The devastating cloudbursts in Kishtwar and Kathua districts last week, which left more than 70 people dead, have once again highlighted Jammu and Kashmir's extreme vulnerability to such sudden, destructive downpours.

Experts say the Union Territory's location in the western Himalayas makes it uniquely prone. Narrow gorges, steep gradients and fragile mountain soil amplify the impact of high-intensity rainfall.

"J&K is highly susceptible to cloudbursts due to its topography and climate. The western Himalayas are marked by abrupt elevation changes that intensify convective activity," said Suhaib A Bandh, assistant professor of environmental science at SP College.

He explained that the phenomenon occurs when moist monsoon winds from the plains collide with cooler Himalayan air, triggering localised but very heavy rainfall.

Adding another perspective, environmental researcher Mudasir Nazir said the Himalayan ranges themselves play a role in trapping clouds.

"High peaks often block clouds from passing. They get pushed back, stacking up against the slopes until the accumulated moisture becomes too heavy. At that point, it collapses, releasing intense rainfall in a short span," he noted, adding that further studies are underway to validate this mechanism.

As cloudburst incidents become more frequent, experts underline the need for better preparedness. "Early warning tools exist, but local systems remain weak. Remote villages need basic communication, evacuation plans and safe shelters," said an environmental analyst.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, responding to public concern, said the government was exploring the idea of setting up an expert panel to identify risk zones and recommend safeguards.

"We cannot prevent natural events like cloudbursts, but we can reduce their impact. I have asked officials to consider forming a team of experts to map vulnerable areas and suggest steps to protect lives," Abdullah said.

Insiders in his party, the National Conference, admit that the proposal comes amid pressure on the government to take stronger measures.

"We cannot allow this to become another discussion after the tragedy. What people in the region expect now is real follow-up — proper mapping, regulation of unsafe constructions, and serious disaster preparedness," a senior party leader remarked.

The cloudburst-hit Chisoti village in Kishtwar district. PTI FILE

US tariffs on India to halt Russia's war: Vance

Says it will make it harder for Russians to profit from oil

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, PTI

US Vice President J D Vance on Sunday said President Donald Trump has applied "aggressive economic leverage" such as "secondary tariffs on India" to force Russia to stop bombing Ukraine.

Vance was speaking during an exclusive interview on NBC News' 'Meet the Press' when he also said the step would "make it harder" for the Russians to get rich from their oil economy.

The Trump administration has been highly critical of India for its procurement of discounted crude oil from Russia. Interestingly, Washington has not been criticising China, the largest importer of Russian crude oil.

India has been maintaining that its energy procurement, including from Russia, is driven by national interest and market dynamics.

Vance remained confident that the US can broker an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine despite potential hang-ups that have emerged since Trump's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. "We believe we've already seen some significant concessions from both sides, just in the last few weeks," Vance said in the interview aired on Sunday.

If the US is not "imposing new sanctions," what is the pressure on Russia? "How do you get them to a place of getting to the table with Zelenskyy and stopping to drop bombs?" moderator Kristen Welker asked.

Trump has applied "aggressive economic leverage," for example, "secondary tariffs on India, to try to make it harder for the Russians to get rich from their oil economy," Vance replied.

"He tried to make it clear that Russia can be reinvited into the world economy if they stop the killing. But they are going to continue to be isolated if they don't stop the killing," he said.

'Zelenskyy may visit India'

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy may visit India, Kyiv's envoy to New Delhi Oleksandr Polishchuk said. "Both sides are working on this. We expect Zelenskyy to be in India, definitely. It will be a great achievement in our bilateral relationship... We are trying to agree on a precise date," Polishchuk told a news agency, recalling that Zelenskyy was invited by PM Narendra Modi.

Modi had visited Kyiv in August 2024 and met Zelenskyy.

India has been calling for dialogue and diplomacy to end the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

AIMING HIGH

Isro on Sunday successfully carried out the first Integrated Air Drop Test to validate the parachute-based deceleration system for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission. The end-to-end demonstration was conducted near Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. PTI

India successfully tests integrated air defence weapons system

NEW DELHI, PTI: India has "successfully" conducted the maiden flight tests of an integrated air defence weapon system (IADWS) off the coast of Odisha, demonstrating its growing military capabilities in the face of an evolving regional security scenario.

The IADWS is a multi-layered air defence system consisting of indigenous quick reaction surface-to-air missiles (QRSAM), very short range air defence system (VSHORADS) missiles and a high-power laser-based directed-energy weapons system, according to the defence ministry.

The indigenous air defence system was flight-tested at 12.30 pm off the coast of Odisha on Saturday.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the developer of the platform, and the armed forces on the flight tests.

"This unique flight test has established the multi-layered air-defence capability of our country and is going to strengthen area defence for important facilities against enemy aerial threats," Singh said on social media.

Under the IADWS, an integrated operation of all the weapon systems will be controlled by a centralised command and control centre. The command and control centre has been developed by the DRDO, which is the nodal laboratory for the air defence programme.

Arunachal tribes resist dam on 'sacred' Siang

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

Amid the government's efforts to persuade communities to support the mega hydropower project on the Siang River in Arunachal Pradesh, opponents are invoking their "age-old divine ties" with the river to resist construction of the proposed dam, which aims to curb the "threat" from China.

A large number of people from the Tani clan held a General Bogum Bokang Kebang (GBBK), a traditional gathering, at Geku village in Siang district on Friday, where the Siang River was formally declared Ane Siang, or Goddess Siang, akin to how the Ganga and Yamuna are revered in other parts of the country.

"We will not allow the government to kill our goddess river for electricity generation. Siang is an integral part of our civilisation and culture, and we cannot allow it to be destroyed," a leader of the Siang Indigenous Leaders' Forum (SIFF), the organisation spearheading the public agitation, told *DH* on Sunday.

The SIFF organised the gathering, which was attended by leaders of the Adi Students' Union, several Gaon Buras (village headmen) and local community representatives from Siang, Upper Siang, Lower Dibang Valley and East Siang districts. Former Arunachal Pradesh CM Gegong Apang also participated in the traditional event, which is typically convened to make crucial decisions related to the culture and identity of the Tani clan. The Adi, Mishing, Tagin, Galo and Nyishi tribes all consider themselves part of the Tani clan.

The government claimed that the construction of the dam would counter possible threats from the 60,000MW dam China is building in the upper reaches of the river in Tibet, which is known as Yarlung Tsangpo. But locals fear the dam in the Siang would bring a catastrophe by disturbing the ecology and causing displacements.

The decision was taken a few days after the Arunachal Pradesh government signed an MoU with residents of Beging village in Siang district, where a pre-feasibility study is to be carried out for a multi-purpose project. The study, however, has remained stalled mainly due to agitation by the SIFF.

After the MoU was signed, deputy CM Chowna Mein said, "When the government of India decided that the Siang dam would be taken up with in a single stage of 11,000MW capacity, it was with a dual vision: to generate power for our future needs and to safeguard against the massive 60,000MW project being built across the border."

Lucknow decks up to welcome Shubhanshu Shukla

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Uttar Pradesh's capital Lucknow is all set to roll out the red carpet for local boy and astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla, who is arriving in his hometown on Monday.

The road leading to Shukla's residence in the Triveni Nagar locality was paved with cement overnight, and hoardings were put up at several crossings in town welcoming him.

According to the sources, the administration will be enforcing route diversions in many parts of the city in an apparent bid to restrict traffic and crowds expected to assemble to greet the astronaut.

Mayor Archana Kharkwal would be present at the airport along with Shukla's parents to receive him.

Sources said a victory parade was also planned from the airport to the Gomti Nagar locality in the city. A road in Triveni Nagar would also be named after Shukla.

Sources said that Shukla would be staying at a government guest house under tight security, and it was not clear if he would be visiting his residence during his stay. His sister Shuchi Mishra said she would tie a rakhee on his wrist while welcoming him.

Shukla joined the Indian Air Force as a fighter pilot in 2006. He was selected as an astronaut for the Gaganyan Mission in 2019.

From 2019 to 2021, he underwent basic astronaut training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Russia.

He completed his training at SpaceX this year, going to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard the AX-IOM-4 with Poland's Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski, Hungary's Toboor Kapu, and the US' Peggy Whitson.

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
YELAHANKA,
BENGALURU – 560 064.
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE No: RWF/EL/OT/ASC/ 2025-26/02 Dated: 22.08.2025

E-TENDER: On behalf of the President of India, the **Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer** invites electronic tender for the following work online through the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in (Works).**

Tender No. RWF/EL/OT/ASC/2025-26/02 Dtd: 22.08.2025

Name of the work: Major Overhauling & Allied Electrical Works of OAFL at RWF, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560064.

Estimated Cost: ₹ 17,70,835/-

EMD: ₹ 35,400/-

Completion period: 12 Months

Closing Date & Time for Tenders: 11.09.2025 at 10.30 Hrs.

This tender notice can be viewed on our website **www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in** .

Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/AM

RSS to have 3-day key meet in Jodhpur from September 5

NEW DELHI, PTI: Senior functionaries of the RSS and its 32 affiliates will assemble in Rajasthan's Jodhpur district next month for a three-day annual coordination meeting that will discuss a host of contemporary issues, including programmes to be organised to mark the Sangh's centenary year.

The three-day meeting will start on September 5.

Sources said the meeting may also discuss "key issues" flagged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech and his announcement for setting up a high-powered demographic mission in the wake of "challenges posed by illegal infiltration".

"This year, Akhil Bharatiya Samanvay Baithak (national level coordination meeting) is being organised in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, on Vikram samvat 2082, Bhadrapad shukla Trayodashi, chaturdashi and Paurnima, i.e., 5th, 6th, and 7th September 2025," RSS national publicity and media department head Sunil Ambekar said in a statement.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, all six joint general secretaries and other key office bearers will participate in the meeting, he said.

"National presidents, national organising secretaries and other key officials of 32 Sangh-inspired organisations, including Rashtra Sevika Samiti, Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, Vishva Hindu Parishad, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, Bharatiya Janata Party, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Vidya Bharati, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, will also participate," he added.

Contemporary issues

Ambekar said that the three-day meeting will discuss a host of contemporary issues, including plans for RSS centenary year programmes.

"During this meeting, a collective critical analysis will be done on the recent important happenings. Furthermore, Karyakartas of various organisations will present information about their work and future plans. A discussion is also expected on the participation of all organisations regarding the Sangh centenary's programs," he said.

SC deplores low salaries of assistant profs in Guj colleges

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said that when educators are not treated with dignity or offered respectable emoluments, it diminishes the value a country places on knowledge and undermines the motivation of those entrusted with building its intellectual capital.

The court emphasised it was just not enough to keep reciting "gurubramha gururvishnu gurdevo maheshwarah" (Sanskrit chant that means "the Guru is Brahma, the Guru is Vishnu, and the Guru is Shiva") at public functions.

"If we believe in this declaration, it must be reflected in the way the nation treats its teachers," said a bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi.

The court expressed displeasure over the low emoluments given to assistant professors appointed on a contractual basis in various government engineering colleges in Gujarat.

"It is disturbing that assistant professors are getting monthly emoluments of Rs 30,000. It is high time that the state takes up the issue and rationalises the pay structure on the basis of the functions they perform," it said.

In its August 22 judgment, the bench said academicians, lecturers, and professors were the intellectual backbone of any nation, as they dedicate their lives to shaping the minds and character of future generations.

The court pointed out that their work went far beyond delivering lessons: It involved mentoring, guiding research, nurturing critical thinking, and instilling values that contributed to society's progress.

However, in many contexts, their compensation and recognition did not truly reflect the significance of their contribution, the bench added.

By ensuring fair remuneration and dignified treatment, the bench said, "We affirm the importance of their role and reinforce the nation's commitment to quality education, innovation, and a brighter future for its youth."

Applying the principles of equal pay for equal work, the court confirmed the directions of the Gujarat High Court's division bench to pay the respondents a minimum of the pay scale of assistant professors.

The court also directed that similarly placed contractually appointed assistant professors be paid a minimum of the scale payable to assistant professors.

Contractual assistant professors were paid Rs 30,000 a month in 2012, which was unchanged in 2025.

Those who worked ad hoc post-2008 were paid Rs 34,000 in 2012 and got Rs 1.16 lakh per month in 2025.

However, those appointed on a regular basis were paid Rs 40,412 in 2012 and around Rs 1.37 lakh per month in 2025.

10 smart villages in every taluk of Maha: Fadnavis launches drive

MUMBAI, DHNS: Harnessing the benefits of technology, Satnavri, a small village in rural Nagpur, has become India's first 'smart and intelligent' village, under the pilot project launched by the Maharashtra government.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday, inaugurated the Smart and Intelligent village — a mission that now would be carried out across the state as part of rural digital transformation.

"Advanced technology-based services in agriculture, health, education and other essential sectors have been made available at Satanvari village in Nagpur... this has created a model of a prosperous village. Soon, 10 villages in every taluka of Maharashtra will be developed as Smart and Intelligent," the chief minister said.

In the first phase of the project, nearly 3,500 villages across the state will be transformed.

KARNATAKA STATE INDUSTRIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED (KSIIDC)
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
4th Floor, East Wing, Khanija Bhavan, No.49, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-01.

INVITATION FOR TENDER for SELECTION OF SECURITY AGENCY FOR PROVIDING SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE INDUSTRIAL CONCERNS UNDER THE CUSTODY OF KSIIDC AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Through GoK e-Procurement Platform
http://kppp.karntaka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home

Karnataka State Industrial & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (KSIIDC) earlier known as Karnataka State Industrial Investment & Development Corporation was established in the year 1964, as a wholly owned undertaking of the Government of Karnataka. KSIIDC is currently involved in recovery of the pending loan portfolios as well as major infrastructure projects taken up on PPP basis like Development of a Sea Port at Tadadi, and Bangalore Signature Business Park (BSBP) near Kempegowda International Airport Limited (KIAL).

As per present requirements of the KSIIDC, the total security guard requirements will be approximately **38** Security Guards, however the requirements may vary as per situations/ requirement during the period of contract of 1 (one) year (Refer TOR). The decision of KSIIDC in this regard will be final.The tender documents may be accessed from e-Procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka (**http://kppp.karntaka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home**).

Important Dates:Tender document can be downloaded **from 25.08.2025 onwards**. Pre-bid meeting: **02.09.2025 at 11.30 Hrs.** Last date of submission of tender document: **24.09.2025 up to 17.30 Hrs.** Further details may be obtained from the above during office hours or website (**http://kppp.karntaka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home**). Any further changes pertaining to the tender will be uploaded in e-procurement platform only.

Contact: General Manager in-charge Recovery, (O) 080-22258131/132/133, e-mail: ipd2@ksiidc.com

Sd/- General Manager I/c – Recovery, KSIIDC & Tender Inviting Authority

DECCAN HERALD
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Unease over new laws in Uttarakhand

If Gujarat was once known as the laboratory of Hindutva, Uttarakhand is now known for implementing some of Hindutva's pilot projects. The state has pioneered in recent years ideas and plans driven by strong Hindutva policies. The Assembly passed in its short session last week three controversial bills—Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Bill, Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill, and Uttarakhand Minority Educational Institutions Bill. They have caused concern over the powers they give to the government to interfere in the lives of individuals and curb the rights of the minorities, especially Muslims.

The bill on the uniform civil code increases punishments with regard to "illegal" live-in relationships. Violation of the various provisions of the law can attract jail terms of up to seven years, and the government will have the power to cancel any registration related to marriage, divorce, live-in relationships and inheritance. The law had already given policing powers to the government over citizens' rights, including the right to privacy, and it has assumed more powers now. The Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill proposes to make the existing anti-conversion law more stringent. It increases the punishment for "forced conversions" to imprisonment of 20 years or life, and expands the definition of forced conversion in such a way that any conversion can be brought under it. The bill on minority education seeks to repeal the existing law on madrasa education. It extends the benefits of minority status to educational institutions run by communities other than Muslims, such as Christians and Sikhs. All madrasas in Uttarakhand will have to seek affiliation from the state education board and then apply for minority status. They will be granted the status only if they fulfil some conditions. Unrecognised madrasas will be shut down. The government will now be able to control the functioning of these institutions.

Dhami government's Hindutva agenda is taking the form of strong-arm regulations

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has persistently carried out an anti-Muslim campaign and some madrasas were closed down even before the bill was passed. He has threatened action against so-called 'love jihad', 'land jihad', 'Mazhar jihad' and '*thook* jihad' and targeted Muslims on those grounds. Hindutva groups have also attacked Muslims and their businesses and institutions. Dhami has claimed that the madrasa law is progressive, and the first of its kind in the country. Muslim groups and organisations have protested against the bill as an attack on the minority rights granted by the Constitution. The criticism is valid, and the bills, passed in a hurry, pose a threat to individual and minority rights.

Modified order on strays more humane

The Supreme Court has done well to modify its earlier order on stray dogs, widely seen as inhuman and unrealistic. The order of the three-judge bench has improved on the direction of the two-judge bench and taken a balanced view of the problem. The earlier order had sought to find a permanent solution, mandating relocation of all stray dogs in the Delhi-NCR region to shelters. This would not have provided a solution because other dogs would have taken the place of the dogs removed from the streets. The court has now taken a more pragmatic and compassionate view. The court said dogs on the streets should be vaccinated and sterilised and released back into their localities but those with rabies or aggressive behaviour should be immunised and kept in shelters.The court also banned feeding of stray dogs in public spaces and ordered dedicated areas to be set up for the purpose.

The new order accepts the reality of the danger posed by street dogs and at the same time addresses the concerns of animal lovers. Animal Birth Control (ABC) rules already exist and they only need to be implemented effectively. The court's latest order has an expanded scope and covers all states and union territories. It has asked the municipal authorities to give a full picture of the resources available with them for effective action under the ABC rules, including the number of pounds, veterinarians, dog-catching personnel, and cages and vehicles. Many civic bodies do not have the infrastructure to handle the stray dog problem in accordance with the directions of the court. Rounding up dogs on the street, vaccinating and sterilising them, and releasing them back into their localities involves effort, human resources and money. The existing rules prescribe the procedure but it is not followed.

It reflects a more caring and pragmatic approach to the problem

Delhi has about 10 lakh stray dogs. The country has millions of them. Civic bodies will have to scale up their efforts and they need help to implement the order. Creating public feeding spaces for dogs and publicising the locations will not be easy. The court has banned feeding of dogs in public spaces but this will also take time to enforce. The question is whether people will take the trouble to go to the designated place to feed the dogs. It is also not clear how "aggressive" dogs are defined. One major solution to the stray dog problem is proper management of solid waste. This should receive greater attention than it does now. The court's order is welcome because it has recognised the need for compassion in the treatment of animals.

VOICES UNHEARD

Social safety net and the need for public consultation

Govt should make the pre-legislative consultation policy a legal requirement and empower local institutions to strengthen welfare schemes

VIJAY SAI PRATAP

In Bihar's Jamui district, women beedi workers lack official cards, limiting wages and medical benefits. Elderly citizens struggle with complex pension processes, risking exclusion.

Women in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district, key cultivators, are often unaware of land rights and schemes, revealing systemic gender bias. India's worsening environmental crisis worsens livelihood and social justice issues, highlighting the need for more effective social welfare policies based on community consultation and inclusive feedback.

Imagine a lifeline meant to save lives, yet many still drown because they can't reach it. In India, despite progress, a strong social safety net fails to reach those in dire need. The gap isn't just logistical but rooted in the ignored voices of those it aims to serve.

India's social protection has grown from 19% in 2015 to an estimated 64.3% by 2025, with nearly 940 million people covered. Yet, many still face barriers to accessing schemes, and issues like leakage, social security gaps and policy flaws persist.

Concerns include - benefits focused on the formal sector, awareness gaps, administrative hurdles, payment delays, and a digital divide. These flaws stem from poor policy formulation and overlook grassroots voices.

Despite continued efforts, socio-economic disparities remain, leaving marginalised groups unaware and struggling. This stems from a lack of understanding of community information flow and eligibility dynamics. Administrative hurdles, infrastructural issues and delays worsen gaps. Top-down policies and lack of inclusive feedback create biases that hinder access for intended populations.

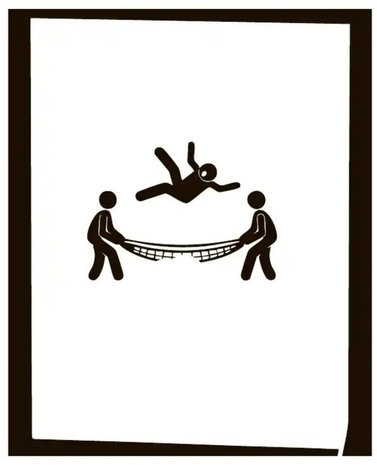
Democracy relies on dialogue to maintain the social contract. The Constitution established a representative democracy, giving law-making power to elected members, which can make citizens feel excluded from real decisions.

Improving democracy requires public participation and open discussions to create better laws and policies. As visibility and technology improve, people want a stronger voice and more feedback channels, which are often lacking or not inclusive today.

Public participation in law-making, rooted in democracy and the Constitution, was supported by India's Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) of 2014, which aimed for public consultation for at least 30 days. It is widely believed that the inadequate implementation of this consultation policy also played a crucial role in perpetuating gaps in social protection.

A robust, genuinely participatory PLCP is an essential requirement for creating social welfare schemes that are truly responsive, equitable, and effective.

While the PLCP can contribute effectively at the policy formulation stage, efforts, like the 73rd and 74th amendments, can be applied and strengthened at the subsequent phases of the policy



implementation and claim-making process.

Legally backed schemes like rural employment generation (MGNREGA), building and construction workers welfare (BOCW) and others require social audits at the monitoring and evaluation stage. These are some of the existing mechanisms available at various stages of the policy cycle.

Implementation of PLCP remains weak and non-mandatory. The policy emphasises consultation, a one-way process, over deliberation involving active dialogue. Although it empowered government departments, it lacks enforceability as an executive policy without legal backing. Data shows many bills lacked consultations and missed deadlines. Public feedback is non-binding, undermining trust and limiting practical effectiveness.

To maximize India's social protection, the government must enforce and strengthen its PLCP by promoting meaningful, widespread public participation at all stages of policy development and implementation.

Some argue extensive pre-legislative consultation is time-consuming, costly, and risks slowing processes or empowering interest groups. They believe elected officials already reflect public will.

However, this overlooks long-term costs of poorly drafted laws and benefits of data-driven insights that prevent issues and improve policy impact.

Representatives can't capture all lived experiences needed for social welfare. The challenge is creating an inclusive, pragmatic consultation that balances efficiency and democratic input.

Digital platforms can enhance transparency, feedback and policy adjustments. Initiatives like PayDash in MGNREGA show technology's potential to boost efficiency, but digital tools aren't standalone; bandwidth and literacy barriers exist. Technology's strength is supporting better human interaction and outreach.

Digital governance should be human-centred, augmenting community engagement and local capacity with accessible, user-friendly solutions supporting marginalised populations.

The solution is to make the PLCP a binding co-creation commitment through legal measures, ensuring ministry involvement and public input. This involves inclusive consultation processes, such as multi-lingual campaigns, accessible feedback channels, simplified legal language and a centralised digital database.

Organisations such as Gram Vaani, Civis, Haqdarshak, and Reap Benefit use technology and community models to promote citizen engagement in governance, policy, and feedback.

We must empower local governance and community organisations with trained representatives. Strengthen panchayat institutions (PRI) and gram sabhas as primary facilitators for local input and social audits, as they provide a reliable framework for consultation.

Using legal models (PRIs, SHGs), promoting diversity, awareness and accountability through social audits and digital platforms can prevent elite capture.

Deliberative processes involving community reps, NGOs, and user groups can amplify impact, avoiding delays. Technology enhances voices through forums, vernacular outreach and civil society involvement in excluded areas. Transparent feedback loops, showing how public input influences policies, build trust and boost engagement among reluctant stakeholders.

India's social protection needs a participatory policy approach, moving away from a top-down method that overlooks community input. Making the PLCP a legal requirement, ensuring transparent consultation, and empowering local institutions can help develop social welfare schemes that meet diverse needs.

An updated PLCP with regular consultations is vital, as early deliberation helps implementation by bridging divides, empowering marginalised groups and strengthening social safety nets. This boosts democratic legitimacy and promotes an equitable, resilient society.

(The writer is co-founder and CEO of Gram Vaani)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Kurukkan, Malgova and memories

The season takes me back to the trees of a bygone era

RADHAKRISHNAN K T

I looked longingly at the few mangoes that I collected from our compound today, savouring their smell. Here in Kerala, this year's mango season is all but over. The taste of these mangoes invariably takes me down memory lane.

In the backyard of our house where I spent my childhood, was a 'grandfather' mango tree. It proudly stood there with its head held high-- higher than any other tree around it. Most climbers tasked to pluck its mangoes would shy away when they saw its height! In the afternoons, while playing in front of our house, we always kept an ear out for that alluring "thud" sound of the falling ripe mangoes. We would then race to the backyard to pick them up. They fell from such a great height; we could clearly hear the sound. With very sweet and fibrous orange pulp and a bit of sap at the stem, I would devour four or five of them at one go!

Back then, we had a "Malgova" mango in front of our house, a stout one that cooled the whole area under it. Its fruit was the size of a coconut with very thick skin and sweet yellow pulp. One mango was enough to fill one plate.

My aunt and uncle lived next door with no clear boundary separating the two compounds. My uncle would sometimes call me from his office room upstairs and give me three almost-ripe mangoes from the tree in their house. When I ran back and gave them to my mother, she would gleefully say, "Ah, *mundappa* mango." I remember that this tree always had three mangoes in one bunch.

They had another mango tree on the north side of their where their pet monkey used to frolic. We called those fruits *kurukkan* mangoes. *Kurukkan* is Malayalam for fox! Those mangoes did not change to yellow or red when ripe; rather, they turned a pale yellow on one part of the skin. When fully ripe they were very delicious but extremely sour otherwise. Could this stealth in advertising their ripeness be the reason for their name?

I remember that my father, when he returned from a plot of land that we had, would bring with him mangoes like Kaalappaadi and Alphonso. Kaalappaadi had a pronounced beak-like projection at its tip with darker bottle-green skin. It had an oily taste but was sweet all the same. Worms were its main bane, though.

Who would have planted those trees whose fruits we enjoyed so much? Did those who planted them have the good fortune of enjoying the fruits of their labour? Perhaps they planted them for future generations! Two of the mango trees that I planted several years ago have still not borne fruit. Are they waiting for the next generation?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dharmasthala mass burial case: A lone wolf operation?

Apropos 'Complainant arrested – Dharmasthala 'mass burial' case' (Aug 24), the SIT inquiry into the allegation of mass rapes, murders, and burials in the Dharmasthala case has taken a dramatic turn with the SIT arresting the complainant and charging him with perjury. The complainant had led the police on a wild goose chase, and eventually, the investigation drew a blank at most of the burial sites he had identified. It now appears that the complainant had been fabricating allegations all along. The case, which attracted significant media attention, may ultimately end in an anti-climactic conclusion. The opposition BJP has demanded a NIA inquiry into the whole affair, hinting at a deep-seated conspiracy to tarnish a popular Hindu shrine, although, on the face of it, this seems to be a lone wolf operation.

C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Evaluate FOB proposal

Apropos 'Traffic police writes to Palike seeking 78 more skywalks' (Aug 23), the wholesale requisition for foot overbridges on Bengaluru roads is perplexing, particularly as the majority of existing ones, erected at considerable cost, have proved severely underutilised. Many FOBs, such as the one at Aurobindo Marg in Jayanagar, appear to be built primarily for hosting giant billboards, as people do not find them useful. Another metal structure near KSR Bengaluru Station stands out for its obvious structural flaws, as well as accessibility and maintenance issues. BBMP should carefully evaluate the proposal carefully before granting approval.

Kamal Laddha, Bengaluru

Modernise India Post

The recent US decision to halt postal parcels worth over $100 is another setback to Indo-US trade ties. Despite declining usage in the digital age, India Post remains a dependable and affordable service. The government must strengthen and modernise this institution to global standards.

R S Narula, Patiala

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Tejashwi Yadav is sinking his own party. Do you (Rahul Gandhi) also want to sink your party?

Ravi Shankar Prasad, BJP Leader

Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake.

Napoleon Bonaparte

TO BE PRECISE

India 'temporarily suspends' postal services to US

IN PERSPECTIVE

Why West's Palestine shift helps Israel

Israel gains when Hamas is excluded from diplomacy and the PA is the partner

JUDIT SEBASTIAN

When European capitals moved to recognise the State of Palestine over the past year, they did something deliberately paradoxical: they affirmed Palestinian statehood while denying any legitimacy to Hamas. Spain, Ireland and Norway led in May 2024; France and the United Kingdom are set to follow in 2025, with Canada and Australia signalling similar intent.

Set against grim realities — the Hamas terror attacks of October 7, 2023, that killed 1,200 people, and Israel's campaign in Gaza that has left more than 62,000 Palestinians dead by mid-August 2025 — recognition looks like a moral corrective. Yet it is more than symbolic. It constructs a version of Palestinian sovereignty that excludes Hamas, recentres the Palestinian Authority (PA) and edges diplomacy back towards a two-state horizon. Paradoxically, this may strengthen Israel's long-term hand.

Recognition is political but carries legal weight. The Montevideo criteria for statehood — population, territory, government and the capacity for external relations — do not require perfect governance, only a plausible subject of international law. The UN General Assembly's May 2024 resolution confirmed Palestine's qualifications for membership and expanded its rights.

Yet none of this legitimised Hamas. The UN Secretary-General's 2025 report listed the group for conflict-related sexual violence, compounding its pariah status alongside US and UK terrorism designations. The West has extended legal standing to Palestine while withholding it from Hamas, steering diplomacy towards a reformed PA under Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa.

Wars end when veto players are contained. Israel's war aims since Oct 2023 have been constant: destroy Hamas' capacity and free the hostages. Recognition shifts the incentives by signalling that Palestinian statehood is not tied to Hamas.

Saudi Arabia has insisted that normalisation with Israel requires a path to Palestinian statehood. But the interlocutor envisaged for "the day after" is the PA, not Hamas. Mustafa has been explicit: the PA must govern Gaza once the war ends.

For Hamas, the choice is bleak: resist and face military assault plus political isolation, or accept a ceasefire that still delivers Gaza to a PA-led administration.

Two judicial tracks frame the conflict. The International Court of Justice has ordered Israel to comply with the Genocide Convention, halting operations in Rafah and ensuring humanitarian access. The UN has expanded Palestinian rights and urged reconsideration of full membership, even if Washington vetoed it.

Institutions bind both sides. For Israel, they impose limits on force. For Palestinians, they anchor sovereignty in institutions subject to donors and oversight. Reconstruction funds, demilitarisation benchmarks and UN participation all presuppose a responsible counterpart — the PA, not Hamas. Israel benefits when its interlocutor is tethered to international conditions rather than rockets and tunnels.

Recognition increases the reputational cost for Israel of indefinite occupation or settlement expansion. But it does so without empowering Hamas or advancing one-state campaigns. Instead, it channels diplomacy towards borders, refugees, security and Jerusalem — issues negotiable within institutions. Even Saudi normalisation, Israel's strategic prize, now hinges on credible Palestinian statehood.

India recognised Palestine in 1988 while deepening ties with Israel. The West's new stance harmonises with this duality: endorse Palestinian sovereignty but reject Hamas' methods. For New Delhi, three consequences follow: 1) A rules-based pathway supports stability in West Asia, vital for energy and the diaspora; 2) Reconstruction of ports, power and health systems may open roles for Indian firms and agencies; and 3) Counter-terrorism coherence is preserved: one may back Palestinian statehood while refusing indulgence to indiscriminate violence.

Critics say Israel is boxed in: recognition hardens global expectations of withdrawal, curbs settlement ambitions and enhances accountability. True, but if the counterpart is a PA sustained by Western and Arab patronage, its incentives lean towards state-building and stability, not insurgency.

Another risk is that Hamas' social base endures. Recognition without real sovereignty could breed spoilers. Yet Hamas' leverage is dwindling: terrorism designations choke its funds, UN reports deepen its stigma, and Arab capitals link reconstruction and normalisation to a post-Hamas order.

Israel gains when: Hamas is excluded from diplomacy; the PA, donor-dependent and supervised, is the partner; regional normalisation rests on statehood, not militancy; and war aims are bounded by international law, where Israel's alliances give it an edge.

In moral terms, no side "wins" after such devastation. But recognition without embrace builds a bridge: from endless war with an armed group to State-to-State bargaining.

Israel vowed in 2023 to destroy Hamas and free its hostages. Nearly two years later, that vow remains only partly fulfilled. Yet in Europe, Arab capitals and beyond, a different pledge is taking shape: Palestinian statehood must advance without Hamas.

If that pledge holds, Israel may find itself confronting not a militia beneath its borders but a constrained State beside them. Recognition is imperfect, but it aligns moral clarity with strategic design. In a region long dominated by maximalism, that alignment is no small achievement.

(The writer is a lawyer, High Court of Kerala)

The second innings: Supporting athletes' career transitions

AISHWARYA GANESH AND PUSHKARNI PANCHAMUKHI

With teenage prodigies such as Vaibhav Suryavanshi and D Gukesh redefining the limits of achievement, the sporting world is witnessing a new wave of teenage brilliance. However, such success stories are rare. The pursuit of a career in sports is often elusive, with barely 1% of aspirants managing to make it a profession.

Given that most young athletes compromise their academic learning to prioritise a potential sporting career, it is of vital to question the economic cost of this trade-off. With a professional sporting career lasting, at best, around forty years, many national and state-level athletes struggle to establish themselves outside sport. They are often compelled to take up modest, entry-level jobs through sports quotas, and some take up jobs as auto and cab drivers or construction labourers.

The costs of sports coaching, equipment, and apparel are considerable; students and their parents specnd a fortune in pursuit of a sporting career. Budding athletes often enrol in schools and colleges where financial assistance is rare.

The greater, often hidden, cost for athletes, however, is that of the 'second innings' -- the cost of transitioning into another career once their sporting days are over. There is a stark absence of a supportive ecosystem for Indian athletes, unlike countries such as Canada, which has the 'Game Plan' initiative to help athletes develop skills for alternative careers, or the UK, where a similar programme exists under the name Life After Professional Sports (LAPS). In 2024, India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports launched the RESET (Retired Sportsperson Empowerment Training) programme with the commendable aim of making former athletes more employable. It seeks to support retired athletes aged 20-50 who have participated in or won medals at international, national and state-level events through a self-paced learning portal combined with on-the-ground training and internships -- an important first step.

Research shows the positive impact of playing sport on an individual's overall physical and mental health and well-being. There is also evidence that greater sports participation enhances pro-social behaviour and reduces crime and anti-social tendencies, particularly among young men. Sport can act as a powerful catalyst for economic growth, contributing to national well-being and fostering a healthier, wealthier society; it is far more than mere recreation. According to the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, sport is a public good, and sports development is a public function. At the level of national policy, sport is to be treated on par with public health and education. However, unlike health or education, sport is popularly viewed as a form of entertainment -- exclusive and accessible mainly to the wealthy -- ignoring its wider societal benefits. On average, India spends a meagre 0.06% of the total government expenditure on sports, compared to Iceland's at 3.3%, Hungary's 1.7% and Sweden's 1.2% in 2022.

Beyond pride and prestige, sports can drive economic growth when developed strategically and efficiently. Revenue generated during the construction of sports stadiums is largely comes from employment, procurement of goods and services, and benefits to allied industries. Five of the stadiums, owned by the Sports Authority of India (SAI), generated a revenue of around Rs 218 crore in 2023-24. SAI's equipment support division procured goods and services worth Rs 38,75,06,477. While a significant share of budgetary funds of Rs 2,462.59 crore allocated to the Department of Sports in 2023-24 is directed towards developing sports infrastructure and supporting young athletes, only 0.2% was earmarked as pensions for meritorious sportspersons.

For athletes, a dual career is not merely desirable but fundamentally essential. Student-athletes suffer academically due to long absences away from university and the lack of flexible course delivery options. Universities in India often 'support' high-performing athletes by granting them attendance or being lenient in assessments. This, to say the least, is far from adequate.

Much sought-after competencies such as teamwork, discipline, resilience, and leadership are often better cultivated through sports. There remains a serious gap in providing customised educational programmes for athletes, designed to integrate these skills and facilitate a successful and fulfilling career transition.

Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is. -Vince Lombardi

If pursuing sport is seen as a viable career option, with structured fallback plans and income security, more people are likely to invest their time and resources in training. This, in turn, can expand the talent pool and lead to greater international success.

It is unfortunate that out of a population of 1.4 billion, India's contingent for the Paris Olympics comprised just 117 athletes competing across 16 disciplines. The team failed to make a mark, finishing with only six medals and ranking 71st overall -- a decline from the Tokyo Olympics, where India was placed 48th. It is therefore imperative to create mechanisms that encourage wider participation and investment in sport. A well-supported sporting ecosystem is not just a social obligation but also a strategic economic investment.

(Aishwarya is a research scholar and Pushkarni is an associate dean at the School of Economics and Public Policy, RV University)

Ultra-Orthodox Israelis, exempt for decades from military service, are now being drafted. Their rage is dividing Israel and threatening PM Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition

The war in Israel over serving in war

ELISABETH BUMILLER, NATAN ODENHEIMER AND JOHNATAN REISS

Ultra-Orthodox Jewish men protest in Jerusalem against a Supreme Court order that requires them to enlist formilitary service. THE NEW YORK TIMES

It was 11 pm in Jerusalem, and one of the city's most insular ultra-Orthodox communities was in a furore.

Hundreds of men in black suits and black hats of the Edah Haredit sect grew agitated as a top rabbi, shouting in Yiddish from a balcony, denounced the Israeli government for drafting the ultra-Orthodox. They had been exempt from military service to focus on religious study since the founding of Israel, but now they were needed for the war in the Gaza Strip.

A large fire blazed in the street, set by ultra-Orthodox protesters who had ignited a dumpster. Police officers on horseback tried to keep order as water cannons on trucks sprayed "skunk water," a vile-smelling liquid, to disperse the crowd.

Outside the nearby Mir Yeshiva, one of the largest and most prestigious religious schools in the country, Haim Bamberger, 23, said he was studying the Torah, as, he said, God wanted. It was Bamberger's way of defending Israel, rather than through military service. "When we do what he wants, he protects us," he said.

The Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, that killed nearly 1,200 people and led to the taking of roughly 250 hostages, Bamberger said, "was partly because many people in this country are not doing what God wants."

Bamberger said he had been drafted but was ignoring his notice and risking jail. He grew more animated as he spoke. "In this country I'm considered a criminal," he said, "because I want to study Torah."

Days later, Israeli military police began arresting ultra-Orthodox draft dodgers. Only a few have been detained so far, according to multiple Israeli news reports, but on Aug. 14, hundreds of ultra-Orthodox protested and clashed with police outside a prison where the Ynet Hebrew news site reported that seven were held.

For now, at a time of rage among the ultra-Orthodox and building tension between the military and the government over Gaza, the military is holding off on mass arrests.

Military service is compulsory for most Jewish Israelis, both men and women. The exemption for the ultra-Orthodox, known in Hebrew as Haredim, has long been resented by the rest of the Jewish population. But the nearly two-year war in Gaza has turned an irritant into a political crisis that is deepening divisions in Israeli society and imperilling Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's fragile coalition.

Last month, two ultra-Orthodox parties crucial to Netanyahu's majority in parliament withdrew from the government after it did not pass legislation exempting the ultra-Orthodox from the draft. Their move could lead to the collapse of the prime minister's coalition and early elections, although Netanyahu has survived far worse political threats.

"The war has pushed everything to an extreme," said Nechumi Yaffe, a professor of public policy at Tel Aviv University who is ultra-Orthodox. Secular Israelis are asking, she said, "Why should our children die and your children are just sitting drinking coffee and learning?"

The policy dates to Israel's beginnings in 1948, when David Ben-Gurion, the nation's founding prime minister, granted the exemption to the 400 yeshiva students in the country at the time. Ben-Gurion envisioned their Torah study, which they believed would safeguard Israel from its enemies, as part of a revitalisation of Jewish religious scholarship lost in the Holocaust.

But as the ultra-Orthodox population grew, the policy was extended, sparking backlash and legal challenges over many years. It did not help that the most extreme ultra-Orthodox sects were anti-Zionists who do not recognise the state of Israel because, they say, it was founded by secular Jews and not for a divine purpose.

In June 2024, the Israeli Supreme Court finally ruled in a landmark decision that without a formal law there was no legal basis for the exemption, and ordered the military to begin drafting ultra-Orthodox men.

The military says it urgently needs 12,000 new recruits for a force exhausted by the war in Gaza. More than 450 Israeli soldiers have died in the enclave; suicides are on the rise; and fewer Israeli reservists, the bulk of the fighters, are reporting for duty. Many have spent more than 400 days in service since the war began.

The military says that 80,000 ultra-Orthodox men ages 18 to 24 are eligible for service and that almost all were sent draft notices in the past year. So far, only 2,940 have enlisted, although there is time for others to sign up before a series of deadlines. Most of the 2,940 will not be ready to go to war now, but will be able to do so after the Israeli military's six months of training.

Their number is still far off the military's target of 4,800 ultra-Orthodox enlistees for the year, "and even further from the army's needs," Brig. Gen. Shay Tayeb, who is in charge of military personnel, told a committee in parliament Aug. 12.

The ultra-Orthodox are unmoved.

"It may be that the circumstances have changed and the times have changed," Motti Babchik, the powerful political adviser to one of the ultra-Orthodox parties that left the government, said in an interview. "But the basic agreement between the Haredis and the state of Israel remains the same."

Rabbi Tamir Granot's son Capt Amitai Granot, 24, was killed by a Hezbollah missile on the border with Lebanon in October 2023, eight days after the Hamas-led attack on Israel. The following March, the rabbi delivered an impassioned speech, widely shared on YouTube, calling on the ultra-Orthodox to serve and share in the pain.

"Was Amitai wrong?" his father asked. "Is it for naught that he now lies under clumps of earth beneath Mount Herzl, he and all his comrades who lie there with him, and other cemeteries around Israel? Should they have stayed in yeshiva and left the army and self-sacrifice to secularists only?"

Granot is part of a different stream of Orthodox Judaism, religious Zionism, which is an integral part of Israeli society and sends large numbers of its yeshiva students to the military. In an interview at his Tel Aviv yeshiva, Granot recounted how he went to the homes of ultra-Orthodox religious leaders after his son's death and tried to reason with them. He told them, he said, that he had students in his yeshiva — he called them his children — and, like his son, they knew they had to serve. He posed a question to the Haredi leaders: "So why are your children better than them? Is their blood more red than our blood?"

Some leaders agreed that the ultra-Orthodox should serve, he said, but none would say so publicly. "One of the biggest told me, 'I can't do it.' I asked him why. He told me, 'If I will do it, I will not exist.'"

In other words, Granot said, "he will lose his status in society and everyone else from the leadership would say he's not a rabbi."

The issue has only intensified since then. Last month, in a video made public of an emergency meeting about the Haredi draft, Hillel Hirsch, a leading ultra-Orthodox rabbi, unequivocally told a small group of colleagues that most Haredi yeshiva students do not want to serve. "They never dreamed of it; they don't dream of it now," he said.

Rabbi Arie Amit, a member of the Chabad Lubavitch sect, which is more inclined than other ultra-Orthodox groups to engage with the outside world, was among the first Haredim in Israel to enlist. It was 2001, he was soon to be 18, and the second intifada, a mass uprising of Palestinians against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, had started the year before.

"I saw in the newspapers that people were blowing up in the streets, and I didn't see myself studying Torah all day," he said in an interview in a cafe in the city of Bat Yam, just south of Tel Aviv. "So I thought I could contribute to my people much better in the military."

He now handles logistics at a temporary base just inside the Gaza border, and said he understood why so many Israelis were upset with the ultra-Orthodox.

"People are being killed, or people are serving many, many months," he said. "It's like: Brother, we're the same people. Why aren't you contributing to the burden that we're carrying?"

The New York Times

Gig worker rights stuck in draft mode

SAURABH BHATTACHARJEE AND MADHULIKA T

The Karnataka government's Draft Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Rules, 2025, intended to clarify and operationalise its parent law -- the groundbreaking Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Ordinance, 2025 -- has recently been released for public comment. Far from providing clarity and delivering on the promise of rights and protections for gig workers, these draft rules leave critical questions unanswered and risk reducing the landmark legislation to a post-dated cheque -- a deferred promise with little present value.

At the heart of the Ordinance is a welfare fee to fund welfare schemes for gig and platform workers across the state. But neither the Ordinance nor the new rules specifies what the rate of that fee will be. The Ordinance merely states that the state government shall fix the 'tax rate' anywhere between 1 and 5% of the payout on each transaction. Worryingly, rather than providing a specific rate, the draft rules defer this decision, undermining the transparency and certainty necessary for any welfare regime. More egregiously, the draft rules are conspicuously silent on the welfare benefits workers will be entitled to. This responsibility has been delegated to the Gig Workers Welfare Board (Welfare Board), with no minimum standards set out. Without a defined fee structure or clear benefits, the purpose of the Ordinance -- the extension of social security for gig workers as an entitlement --may not be effectively realised.

A promising aspects of the Ordinance was its requirement that platforms enter into "fair contracts" with workers. These contracts were meant to be "transparent and comprehensive", including "fair terms of piece and/or time rate norms". Workers were to have the right to refuse offered tasks. It was expected that this statutory promise of 'fair contracts' would be fleshed out in the rules. Yet, the draft rules provide no meaningful guidance on what constitutes fairness in practice, nor do they define principles for payment rates or regulate deductions.

Similarly, while the Ordinance calls for "reasonable working conditions", including rest periods and access to sanitary facilities, the rules offer no concrete standards. Although the Ordinance envisages sector-specific occupational safety and health standards, the draft rules leave such standards to be determined in future bylaws.

By failing to define the content of these statutory provisions, the draft rules risk turning these guaranteed rights into little more than a rope of sand. Instead, they should have reinforced the Ordinance's recognition of fairness in payment by mandating that payment cannot be fall below the applicable minimum wage. Judicial precedents establish that any payment below minimum wage cannot qualify as "fair terms of piece and/or time rate norms". Likewise, "reasonable working conditions" should have been explicitly defined to include a mandatory log-off period after several hours of service in a day, reasonable rest breaks after continuous active work, access to safety guidance, emergency helplines, training on occupational hazards, and safe work practices.

Perhaps most concerning is the lack of specificity in the composition and procedure of different grievance redressal bodies envisaged by the Ordinance. For example, the Ordinance establishes an Internal Dispute Resolution Committee (IDRC) to handle worker complaints, but the rules leave its composition entirely to platforms' discretion. Past experience from the operation of other laws like the POSH Act shows that the composition of such internal committees determines their effectiveness. Without mandatory worker or union representation on these committees, they become little more than platform-controlled tribunals.

Moreover, the Ordinance contemplates an Appellate Authority to hear appeals against the decisions of the Welfare Board. Yet, here too, the draft rules provide no guidance on its composition, powers, or establishment timeline. This omission may significantly delay implementation and leave workers without effective recourse mechanisms.

On the whole, the draft rules fail to bring the Ordinance's promise to life. The state government had taken a laudable step for protecting gig worker rights by promulgating the Ordinance, envisioning social security, occupational health, and transparency in algorithmic decision-making. However, by refusing to make hard choices about rates of welfare fee rates and structures of benefit and leaving essential enforcement mechanisms so bare-boned, the draft rules risk reducing what can be a landmark advance for gig worker protections to little more than a legislative half-measure that promises much but delivers little for the workers it is designed to help.

(Saurabh is an associate professor and co-director at the Centre for Labour Studies, and Madhulika is a research associate at the Centre for Labour Studies, NLSIU)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: AUGUST 1975

PM sees no danger of mutiny

New Delhi, August 24
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said today while she did not think there was any real danger of mutiny by the armed forces, incitements to them had caused confusion. Appearing on an American television network, Mrs. Gandhi said life in India was gradually returning to normal, but she could not set a date when the Emergency would be lifted. Asked about CIA or other US Government efforts to undermine the Indian Government, Mrs. Gandhi referred to what had appeared in the American press itself and how it had disturbed people in the US and India.

25 YEARS AGO: AUGUST 2000

142 bodies found at Gulf Air crash site

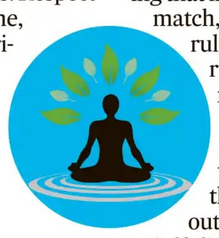
Manama, Aug 24 (AFP, Reuters)
Rescue crews have found 142 bodies from the crash site of the Gulf Air plane that came down in the sea near Bahrain with 143 people aboard, an airline spokesman told AFP today. Meanwhile, in Cairo Airport, stunned relatives of passengers on the Airbus A-320 gathered late last night, venting their grief. Others demanded details about the loss of the airbus, which was carrying 63 Egyptian passengers out of the 135 aboard when it plunged into the sea near the end of its flight from Cairo.

OASIS | NAJIB SHAH

Beyond the boundary, the spirit of life

Individual sports events and team sports offer important life lessons - none perhaps more so than cricket. And that is because of the unique evolution of the game; thus, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) the guardian of the laws of the game, has in the preamble to the laws highlighted also the 'Spirit of Cricket'.

Respect is critical to the spirit - respect for the captain, the teammates, opponents and the authority of the umpires. The spirit also emphasises the need to play hard and fair, have self-discipline, create a positive atmosphere by one's conduct, congratulate the success even of the opposition and thank officials and the opposition irrespective of the result. Each of these dictums apply to life - as it does to every other game. Respect is important in all our dealings. Respect for the other, respect for time, respect for rules, for authority . It comes only when one is confident with oneself and to accepts differences in others. Respect is the lubricant of a well-organised, smooth functioning society or even the world order . Where there is no respect for each other or the laws, there is mayhem. Life becomes challenging with violence and brute force taking over leading to anarchy.



Playing hard involves training and practice. It means perseverance and persistence. Playing fair means knowing that irrespective of the results of a match, it must be played within the rules-and if need be, beyond the rules, when one should do the right thing. Taking the analogy of cricket where when you know you have not caught the ball cleanly and despite the umpire giving the payer out , you call the player back.

Self-discipline involves restraint. It teaches you to treat defeat and victory with equal calmness ; to let the defeat motivate you to do better the next time and the victory to not make you overconfident.

Each of these are virtues, which if adopted, will make one a better person. Mike Brearley, the philosopher-captain, says it best: "Examining the topic of the 'spirit of cricket' is one route into wider questions about honesty, transparency, and generosity; about deviousness, trickiness, and cheating." The spirit of cricket has been described as that 'will-o'-the-wisp located in an imaginary cloud castle three-four miles above the Lord's cricket ground.' But it is real and most certainly much more than that. It is life itself. Or to paraphrase CLR James what does anybody know of life who know not cricket.

Debate must, but not good if Parl is not allowed to run: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI, PTI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said Parliament or Assemblies are places of debate and discussion, but it is not good if the House is not allowed to function session after session in the name of opposition for narrow political gains.

Shah made the remarks here while addressing the All India Speakers Conference, three days after the Monsoon Session of Parliament came to an end with little business conducted due to repeated disruptions and adjournments following opposition protests.

The home minister also said that when there is limited debate or discussions in Parliament, the contribution of the House in nation-building gets affected. "Debate must take place in a democracy. But it is not good if the House is not allowed to function in the name of opposition for someone's narrow political gains."

"Opposition should always be restrained. But in the name of opposition, if the House is not allowed to function day after day or session after session, it is not good. The country has to ponder over it, the people have to ponder over it, and elected representatives have to ponder over it," he said.

Shah said all discussions must have some sense, and everyone must work towards increasing the dignity and respect of the post of the Speaker.

Editors Guild slams Cong over legal threats to journalist

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Editors Guild of India on Sunday voiced concern over a statement by a Congress leader regarding the intention to file a criminal complaint against senior broadcast journalist Shiv Aroor.

Aroor's reportage on alleged electoral irregularities during the Maharashtra Assembly elections and remarks of a psephologist, which were subsequently withdrawn for being erroneous, had riled the Congress.

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera had claimed that Aroor's reportage on NDTV was a "malicious attempt" to defame the Congress and Rahul Gandhi. Khera said this "won't go unanswered" and added that a criminal complaint had been filed against the journalist.

In a statement, the Editors Guild said, "Without offering any comment on the content of the broadcast in question, the Guild is troubled by the creeping tendency to invoke criminal charges against members of the media in response to their professional work."

Aadhaar alone cannot get one enrolled as voter: BJP

Says the card does not establish citizenship

NEW DELHI, PTI

The BJP on Sunday accused the Opposition of indulging in propaganda after the Supreme Court said voters excluded during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar could submit Aadhaar along with other documents, asserting that the apex court did not say Aadhaar alone could be a valid document to get voting rights.

Aadhaar was only proof of identity and residence, and did not establish citizenship, the BJP's IT Department head Amit Malviya said, adding that nowhere in the judgment did the Supreme Court even suggest that it should be used as a valid document for the SIR.

The Opposition is spreading propaganda over the issue, he said.

The Representation of the People (RP) Act stated that a person would be disqualified from registration in the electoral roll if they were not a citizen of India, declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind, or were disqualified under law relating to corrupt practices or offences in elections, said Malviya.

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
Former Union minister

"In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Samajwadi Party won 37 seats in UP, the BJP won 33, and the Congress bagged six seats. It was the same Election Commission then. If people vote for them, the EC is fine, but if they lose, it is bad. How can this logic work?

TEJASHWI YADAV
RJD leader

"The EC has lost its credibility... its special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar is a direct attack on the democratic setup of the country. This is an attempt to steal people's votes. The EC is working as a cell of the BJP... it has become 'Godi Aayog'... its officials are behaving like BJP workers.

The Aadhaar Act, he added, says it is only proof of identity and residence, and does not establish citizenship.

"Asking the Election Commission to include Aadhaar as a document for automatic voter enrolment would render Section 16 of the RP Act and the Aadhaar Act meaningless. In fact, this very bench, on August 12, held that Aadhaar is not a legal document to prove citizenship," said Malviya.

Attributing to the Supreme Court what it had not said was contempt of court, he said in a swipe at the Opposition parties.

"The truth is simple: SIR is intact, Aadhaar alone cannot get you enrolled; dead, fake, Bangladeshi, and Rohingya names will be removed, and only Indian citizens will elect the next government — not foreigners," he said.

Malviya also claimed 65 lakh names removed from the draft voter roll in Bihar included fake, dead, and Bangladeshi and Rohingya names.

While the Supreme Court asked for the list of deleted names to be published so that affected persons could reapply, Malviya said only 84,305 objections had been filed so far, which was barely 1.3% of the total deleted names—well below the standard margin of error.

"Clearly, the 'vote chori' cry is manufactured," he said.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi being hugged by a supporter as the former rides a motorcycle during the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra', in Bihar's Purnea district. PTI

Priyanka to join yatra, add zing to Rahul's Bihar blitz

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi will join Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi during his ongoing 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' (Voters' Rights March) in Bihar on August 26 and 27, lending momentum to the Opposition's campaign against alleged vote theft by the Election Commission.

The Wayanad MP is scheduled to accompany Rahul as the yatra resumes from Supaul and Madhubani in North Bihar on August 26.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Karnataka counterpart Siddaramaiah are also expected to participate in the yatra on August 27 and August 29, respectively. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav is likely to join the march on August 30.

Meanwhile, addressing a press conference in Araria on Sunday, Rahul said he had observed a new trend during his yatra. "Bihar is one state where even children are politically conscious. Children, not yet adults, are now approaching me and chanting slogans like 'Vote chor, gaddi chhodd' (Those involved in vote theft should resign)," he said.

Buoyed by the response to his yatra in a state where the Congress had long been dormant, Rahul appears to have infused a new life into the organisation.

This may help the grand old party drive a harder bargain with the RJD, which had been reluctant to concede more than 50 of the 243 Assembly seats to the Congress.

An indication of this possibility came from RJD leader and undeclared CM face Tejashwi Yadav, who was miffed with the Congress over its poor performance in the 2020 Assembly polls, when it contested 70 seats but managed to win only 19.

But Rahul's yatra has changed all the permutations and combinations. The joint march by I.N.D.I.A bloc leaders has not only boosted the Opposition's morale, but also given the Congress the bargaining power to seek a few more winnable seats that could help shore up its numbers in the Assembly.

"The issue of 'vote-theft' is fine, but it won't hold much water once the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) exercise for addition and deletion of names concludes in September. Rahul should also focus on three other primary issues: migration, poor education system and massive corruption in the state," said veteran journalist Giridhar Jha.

Now, AAP snubs Parl panel on PM-CM sacking bill

Says bills aimed at jailing Opposition leaders

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

After Trinamool Congress and Samajwadi Party, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP on Sunday announced that it will not join the Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Bills seeking removal of top political executives if in custody for 30 days, claiming the purpose of the proposed laws was not to end corruption but to topple Opposition governments.

The announcement was made by AAP Rajya Sabha floor leader Sanjay Singh, who said the three Bills were "unconstitutional" and it's purpose is to put opposition leaders in jail, topple the Opposition-led governments and "end democracy in the country".

"We will not join the Joint Committee. The purpose of this Bill is not to end corruption because the BJP loves corruption and the corrupt," Singh said. He added one should not have any misconception that the Bills were about fighting corruption.

"The relationship between corruption and the BJP is like that of Laila and Majnu, Romeo and Juliet. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP loves the corrupt. In which party are leaders like Ajit Pawar, Narayan Rane, G Janardhan Reddy, BS Yeddyurappa, Mukul Roy, Himanta Biswas Sarma and Suvendu Adhikari," he said.

Reacting to the AAP decision, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha floor leader Derek O'Brien said, "It is a valueless committee." On Saturday, Trinamool and SP had announced their decision not to join the JPC.

The issue of joining the Joint Committee has divided the I.N.D.I.A bloc and the decision of Trinamool, SP and AAP may put pressure on other parties, including Congress, which are inclined to join the panel.

At a meeting of I.N.D.I.A bloc last Wednesday, the day Bills were referred to the committee, Trinamool Congress had argued that the entire Opposition should boycott the Joint Committee proceedings.

However, CPM and RSP leaders were of the view that boycotting the JPC was not prudent as they would not have an official platform to record their opposition.

There have been differences within the I.N.D.I.A bloc over participating in the discussion at the "introduction" of the bill, with Congress and others, barring Trinamool, joining it while protesting. However, the Trinamool was against it and vehemently protested.

WEATHER CHAOS

A portion of the wall of Amer Fort collapsed after heavy rainfall in Jaipur on Sunday. Six people – including four minors and a government school teacher – died in separate rain-related incidents, as heavy to very heavy rainfall continued to lash parts of Rajasthan over the past 24 hours, triggering flood-like conditions in several areas. PTI

Will stop benefits for illegal Ladki Bahin claimants: CM

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Amid charges of illegal beneficiaries involving the Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, the Maharashtra government scrambled for damage control, with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announcing that payments to the ineligible would be stopped.

"The benefits of the scheme being claimed by some people illegally will be stopped," Fadnavis said on Sunday.

The statement came amid reports that a large chunk of illegal beneficiaries are from two deputy chief ministers'—Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar—home districts of Thane and Pune, respectively, and some of the senior ministers.

Fadnavis said that an inquiry is being conducted into over 26 lakh people allegedly claiming the monthly benefits under the scheme.

According to the cash benefit schemes, it allows only two women per household between the ages of 21 and 65 to receive benefits. "However, it has come to light that more than two women from the same family, or those outside the age bracket, have availed themselves of the monthly payment of Rs 1,500," he said.

State minister Chhagan Bhujbal said ineligible beneficiaries should voluntarily withdraw their names, and action should be taken against men who enrolled in the scheme meant only for women. He said the scrutiny of beneficiaries is still underway for the scheme.

"As per rules, those owning four-wheelers or drawing government salaries were not eligible. Some names got included as officials were busy with elections. After the polls, I suggested that such women withdraw their names and that no punitive action be taken against them. But if men have applied, they must face punishment," he said.

NCP (SP)'s Karjat-Jamkhed MLA Rohit Pawar said that the scheme was brought out by the Maha Yuti alliance with a political motive.

(With PTI inputs)

Raj Thackeray backs Rahul on vote-chori charges

MUMBAI, DHNS: Close on the heels of Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, his cousin and MNS President Raj Thackeray has backed Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi on the vote-chori charges.

However, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis slammed the Thackeray cousins, who are now working on a political alliance in the run-up to the local body polls.

"They are just trying to console their own hearts and were attempting to tell their workers that they were indeed winning, that there was a conspiracy in their defeat so that the workers don't scatter," said Fadnavis.

Raj said that he had been raising the issue since 2016. "Vote theft has been taking place for the past 10 years. I have been speaking about it since 2016. I also met Sharad Pawar, Sonia Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee, and other opposition members. In 2017, I had suggested boycotting the polls."

"When members from the Opposition as well as the government are raising doubts, the EC should have investigated them, but it prefers to suppress the matter," Raj added.

Champai Soren under house arrest ahead of tribals' protest

RANCHI, PTI: Former Jharkhand chief minister and BJP leader Champai Soren was placed under house arrest on Sunday to prevent law and order issues in view of a protest by tribal outfits against land acquisition for a multi-crore state-run health institute, police said.

Champai Soren

The protesters alleged that police lathi-charged and fired tear gas shells to disperse them from the site of the proposed project in the Nagri area of Ranchi. However, police could not be reached for a comment to verify the claim.

Champai Soren's son Babulal, along with supporters who were on their way to Ranchi, has also been detained at a police station, police said.

'Preventive measure'

"Champai Soren is under house arrest as a preventive measure to maintain law and order in view of the tribal outfits' protests," Ranchi City Deputy Superintendent of Police K V Raman said.

Soren, however, termed the move undemocratic and said his house arrest was ordered for supporting the tribals and their protest.

Over 20 tribal groups, farmers, and landowners had called for a 'Hal Joto, Ropa Ropo' (plough field, plant saplings) protest on Sunday at the site where the Rs 1,074-crore Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences-2 hospital project has been proposed.

Despite barricades protesters, farmers and land owners from different villages gathered at the proposed site with posters in their hands displaying pictures of former chief minister Shibu Soren and his message 'Harwa toh joto na yaar... kaise bachega?' (plough the field... else how will you survive?).

Protesters alleged that the police lathi-charged and fired tear gas at them to disperse them from the protest spot. The agitators claimed that by defying resistance from the police, they planted saplings on the land where the hospital project is proposed to be set up.

Poll promises unfulfilled as Omar Abdullah nears one year in office

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

From the Jammu and Kashmir administration's recent move to take over 215 schools affiliated with the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and its Falah-e-Aam Trust (FAT) to the latest sacking of government employees over alleged terror links, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah finds himself navigating one of the most difficult phases of his political career.

As Abdullah approaches October 16, his one-year mark in office, almost all the ambitious guarantees that the National Conference (NC) announced in its 2024 election manifesto remain unfulfilled.

The NC's "12 Guarantees" promised a political, economic, and social reset in the Union Territory. Among the top pledges were restoration of Article 370 and statehood, and implementation of the full autonomy resolution passed by the erstwhile Assembly in 2000.

Other promises included 200 units of free electricity, repeal of the Public Safety Act, political prisoners' release, transfer of hydro-power projects to J&K, Kashmiri Pandits' dignified return, and easier passport verification.

NC leader Omar Abdullah takes oath as the Chief Minister of J&K, in Srinagar, on October 16, last year. PTI

However, over 10 months in, Abdullah has little to show. Even his much-trumpeted vow to end "unjust termination" of government employees has been undermined as the Lieutenant-Governor-led administration continues with the dismissal of staff accused of links to militancy.

Opposition parties have seized on this. "The NC sought votes based on restoring people's dignity and rights of the people. Today, not one of those promises has been delivered," People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader and MLA Waheed Parra told *DH*.

"It proves what we had been warning — that after August 2019, Delhi will never allow any government in J&K to function with real authority."

Meanwhile, the Centre has given no indication of statehood, let alone Article 370 or autonomy.

The silence has left Abdullah exposed before his own cadre. In his Independence Day speech, the NC vice-president admitted, "My hopes from New Delhi have been dashed."

Yet, Abdullah tried to rally his supporters by calling for a more people-centric struggle: "We cannot afford to sit back and wait."

Political analysts believe Abdullah is walking a "tightrope" between the NC's promises and the limited authority the Central government is willing to grant his regime.

BJP, CPM set for Kerala polls; Cong battles scandal fallout

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

The CPM and BJP camps in Kerala have already begun preparations for the upcoming local body elections, while the Congress is struggling to recover from the damage caused by sexual misconduct allegations against party MLA Rahul Mamkootathil.

Despite senior party leaders openly expressing displeasure over Mamkootathil continuing in office, the young, first-time MLA is trying to defend himself.

Local body elections are scheduled to take place later this year, while Assembly polls are expected before next May.

The BJP has kicked off its election campaign, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah visiting the state several times and holding meetings with party leaders. The party's new state leadership, headed by Rajeev Chandrasekhar, is also carrying out focused efforts aimed at winning key local bodies like the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation.

The CPM's decision to host a global Ayyappa conclave and to disburse pending social welfare pensions is widely seen as a strategy to woo voters ahead of the elections.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday cautioned against the BJP's attempts to make electoral gains in Kerala.

Serious concerns within the Congress camp over the adverse impact of sexual misconduct allegations against one of its most dynamic MLAs were clearly evident, with senior leaders, including Opposition Leader VD Satheesan — who was once considered Mamkootathil's godfather—openly expressing displeasure.

Other senior figures, such as Ramesh Chennithala, were also reportedly urging Mamkootathil to resign in order to protect the party's image.

Sources indicate that the Congress is worried that a potential bypoll in Palakkad, triggered by Mamkootathil's resignation, could hurt its electoral prospects.

The BJP, which finished second in Palakkad in the last two elections, may stand to gain from the fallout.

BJP warns Vijayan, Stalin against misusing Ayyappa faith

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: The BJP has warned the chief ministers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu against attending the global Ayyappa conclave in Kerala on September 20 without first apologising to Hindus.

BJP state president Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that unless Pinarayi Vijayan and MK Stalin tender an apology to Hindus before the event, BJP workers would take to the streets to oppose their participation.

"Vijayan, Stalin, and his son — Tamil Nadu Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin — have hurt Hindu sentiments. Pinarayi's government jailed many Ayyappa devotees and unleashed brutal police action against those who tried to uphold traditions regarding restrictions on women's entry to the Sabarimala temple," Chandrasekhar said.

He also alleged that the CPM government was trying to fool the public by organising the conclave ahead of elections.

Noida dowry murder accused shot in leg by police amid escape bid

Police say he tried to flee after snatching a cop's pistol; his mother also arrested

Police personnel apprehend Vipin Bhati after he was shot in leg while escaping custody on Sunday. PTI

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

As outrage grew over the alleged dowry killing of a 26-year-old woman in Greater Noida, police on Sunday arrested her mother-in-law, while her husband was shot in the leg as he tried to escape custody.

He was sent to judicial custody for 14 days.

According to police sources here, the accused, Vipin Bhati, was detained for questioning in connection with the incident.

He was taken to his residence to recover the bottle containing the inflammable liquid that was allegedly poured on his wife Nikki before she was set on fire.

That was when he tried to escape after snatching the pistol of a cop, said the police.

Vipin allegedly opened fire at the cops and was shot in the leg in retaliatory firing. He was admitted to a hospital. He denied that he had killed his wife and claimed that she had died by suicide.

The police said Vipin and his mother brutally thrashed the victim over dowry demands and later poured thinner on her before setting her on fire with a lighter.

The couple's son, who witnessed the horrific incident, Vipin set his mother on fire.

Nikki's sister Kanchan, who is married to Vipin's brother Rohitand was a witness to the incident, rushed her to the hospital, but she succumbed to her injuries on the way, sources said.

The victim's father Bhikhari Singh, a resident of the Rupbas village in the district, said that his daughters Kanchan (29) and Nikki (26) were married to brothers Rohit Bhati and Vipin Bhati, respectively, in 2016. .

He said he had given an SUV and other household items in dowry, but their in-laws had been demanding Rs 35 lakh in cash.

He claimed that many times a panchayat was organised to settle the dispute, but all the efforts were wasted.

The accused husband's mother, Daya (55) and wife of Satyaveer, has also been arrested. She had been absconding since the incident and has been named in the FIR filed by the victim's family, the PRO said.

(With PTI inputs)

Hyderabad man kills pregnant wife, dismembers body

HYDERABAD, PTI: A five-month pregnant woman was brutally murdered allegedly by her husband, who then chopped her body parts at their house in Medipally, and threw the pieces in the Musi river, police said on Sunday.

The incident occurred at about 4.30 pm on Saturday when the 27-year-old accused, as a driver with a ride-hailing company, murdered his 21-year-old wife by throttling her over frequent quarrels due to family disputes.

To conceal the evidence, he chopped the body into pieces using a hexa blade, disposed of the head, hands, and legs by throwing them into the Musi River, at Prathapsingaram, and retained the headless and legless trunk in his room, DCP (Malkajgiri Zone) P V Padmaja told reporters.

The accused went to the river three times to throw the pieces, the DCP said.

Later, he called his sister and told her that his wife went missing, who then informed a relative, who took him to a police station. He again tried to portray the murder as a missing incident, but during questioning, he confessed to killing his wife, she said.

A case under relevant BNS sections on charges of murder and causing disappearance of evidence of offence was registered, and the accused was taken into custody.

The dismembered body was found in the house. The police are yet to find the chopped body parts in the river.

No date-of-birth correction after 25 years of service: SC

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said a workman applying for correction of date of birth (DoB) after a delay of 25 years — almost towards the end of service — was not to be permitted.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta declined a workman's claim to correct his date of birth from 1962 to 1970 based on a 1987 school-leaving certificate of matriculation examination issued in 2015.

On an appeal filed by the employer in relation to the management of Katras areas of Dhanbad's M/s Bharat Coking Coal Ltd, the apex court set aside the Jharkhand High Court's division bench order of September 6, 2023.

The HC's division bench had set aside a single-judge bench order and restored a decision by the Central Government Industrial Tribunal that allowed a plea by workman Shahdeo Das to correct his DoB from September 18, 1962, to January 5, 1972, based on his matriculation certificate.

"What is interesting is that the respondent, at the time of entering into service, gave the details of his dependants that included his wife aged 24 years, four daughters aged six, four, and two years, and six months, and also his father aged 60 years. The nominee's name in the service book was mentioned as Smt Keshari Devi, his wife," it noted.

The court also pointed out that the workman had given these details in the service book on his own.

"If his claim is accepted, he would be only 18 years of age at the time of entering service. It is difficult, almost impossible, to have a wife aged 24 years and four daughters aged between six months to six years [at that time]," said the bench.

If the workman had actually studied matriculation and there was a Transfer Certificate/School Leaving Certificate of 1987, it ought to have been filed either at the time of joining the service in 1992 or at any time soon thereafter, the bench said.

CISF to form all-woman commando team to secure sensitive installations

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has decided to create an all-woman commando team for conducting specialised counter-terrorist operations, officials said on Sunday.

A group of 100 female personnel deployed across the country as part of the aviation security group (ASG) guarding civilian airports are the first to be trained for the task.

The about 1.70 lakh-strength CISF is primarily tasked to guard 69 civil airports, the Delhi Metro, and other vital installations in the government and private domain.

"The training for the first batch of women personnel in commando skills has been started at a training centre in Barwaha, Madhya Pradesh.

"This eight-week advanced commando course will prepare women personnel for quick reaction team and special task force duties at high-security establishments and plants," a CISF official said.

The personnel will be trained in physical fitness and weapons training, live-fire drills under stress, endurance-building exercises like running, obstacle courses, survival training in forests, and a 48-hour confidence-building exercise designed to test decision-making under adverse conditions, he said.

The central armed police force, which functions under the Union home ministry, has 12,491 women (8% of its strength) in its ranks at present.

In 2026, 2,400 more women staff will be recruited, and in the coming years, recruitment will be structured in such a way that women consistently make up at least 10% of the force as per the directions of the home ministry, the official said.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

ROUGH DAY, HONEY?
THE WORST... I CAN'T THINK OF ONE THING THAT WOULD CHEER ME UP!
HOW ABOUT TWO THINGS? ① A NETFLIX MARATHON OF "THE NIGHT AGENT" ② AND A YANKEE POT ROAST DINNER
KISS
I INVENTED PUSHING DAGWOOD'S BUTTONS!
NIGHT ACTION!
CODE, PLEASE!

Hagar The Horrible

HELGA, I WISH YOU WOULDN'T WRITE IN YOUR DIARY IMMEDIATELY AFTER WE'VE HAD AN ARGUMENT!
OH, PLEASE! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M WRITING ABOUT YOU?!
I HEARD QUILL PENS SNAPPING!

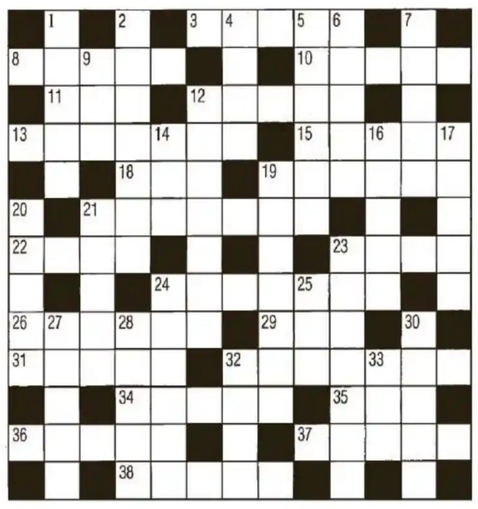
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

Marvin

I DOUBT DAD'S ABILITY TO BUILD MY NEW STROLLER
HE NEEDS A TEST DUMMY TO MAKE SURE IT'S STRUCTURALLY SOUND
THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12232



CRYPTIC

ACROSS

3 Drift aloft like an airship (5)
8 Author who created the term 'adsum'? (5)
10 Basket with a hole in it (5)
11 Good as can be for cooking (3)
12 Just the horse to nip around with? (5)
13 Suitable surname for a sailor boy (7)
15 It's about them forming partnerships (5)
18 Invariably five short (3)
19 By such means, send a letter (6)
21 The drunken sot possibly sent out for a hat (7)
22 Work in a shop usually (4)
23 Think to charge a pound (4)
24 Better – yet so inferior! (7)
26 To half starve the chaps is a bit of a bloomer (6)
29 Leaves in hot water? (3)
31 The wrong thing to be found in (5)
32 Payment of very little substance for writers (7)
34 He may have a special suit for work (5)
35 Volunteers a kiss as tribute (3)
36 She helped Jason to fleece her dad (5)
37 A refreshing thing to do (5)
38 Beast of burden all over its master? (5)

DOWN

1 To tease us up can be sweet! (5)
2 As egg containers they should share the load (7)
4 Had been lying to a chap – the padre! (4)
5 In a west London town, I make a case (6)
6 Runs only slowly, having a bad heart (5)
7 She's a treasure to the master (5)
9 Would a tartan lining suit it? (3)
12 Share option arranged outright (7)
14 Make sure your eyes are open (3)
16 Three could put you to sleep (5)
17 Cunningly, in a silly way! (5)
19 A show dog? (7)
20 Think about nothing but a rodent (5)
21 In this puzzle, the second lump! (5)
23 Sumptuously provided with food around the Orient (7)
24 A broken romance (6)
25 The little boy's room (3)
27 He keeps attempting to name a German city (5)
28 Beautiful girl, if undersized (5)
30 Deceived G-man interrupted by a beefy brute (5)
32 Betting system that may go to one's head (4)
33 Valiant fellow? (3)

ACROSS

3 Touches down (5)
8 Groups (5)
10 Artist's stand (5)
11 Boy's name (3)
12 Freewheel (5)
13 Skyline (7)
15 Ancient artefact (5)
18 Raised edge (3)
19 Begin again (6)
21 Diapers (7)
22 Go by boat (4)
23 Vessel for flowers (4)
24 Thrive (7)
26 Stick or hold fast (6)
29 Extinguished (3)
31 Parisian underground (5)
32 Feeler (7)
34 Gemstones (5)
35 Groove (3)
36 Deadly sin (5)
37 Evaluates (5)
38 Arm joint (5)

DOWN

1 Truncheon (5)
2 Naval commander (7)
4 Soon (4)
5 Desirable residence (3,3)
6 Satisfies (5)
7 Jeans fabric (5)
9 And not (3)
12 Liken (7)
14 Fastening device (3)
16 Of the moon (5)
17 Surrenders (5)
19 Motives (7)
20 Major religion (5)
21 Time when dark (5)
23 Old soldier (7)
24 Drive or push forward (6)
25 Place (3)
27 Disparage (5)
28 Wear away (5)
30 Bury (5)
32 Too (4)
33 Pistachio, say (3)

SOLUTIONS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2642

CRYPTIC

ACROSS: 1 Drastic, 5 Chop off, 9 Charade, 10 On sight, 11 Dross, 12 Last thing, 13 Dismantle, 15 Bugle, 16 Maine, 18 At the helm, 21 Make clear, 24 Drawn, 25 Olivier, 26 Ceiling, 27 Hygiene, 28 Pretend.

DOWN: 1 Decided, 2 At a loss, 3 Translate, 4 Creel, 5 Crow's feet, 6 Onset, 7 Ongoing, 8 Fatigue, 14 To a degree, 15 Breadline, 16 Mammoth, 17 Inkling, 19 Evasive, 20 Managed, 22 Chime, 23 Recap.

◆SU-DO-KU-6684◆

		3	4					
	4	5			2		9	
9		8		1		4		
	9			7				8
			1	6	9			
7				3			1	
		9		2		6		4
	3		7			2	8	
					6	3		

medium

SOLUTION TO 6683

5	4	1	3	9	2	6	8	7
7	6	2	5	8	1	9	3	4
8	3	9	6	4	7	5	2	1
6	7	8	1	2	9	3	4	5
3	2	5	8	6	4	7	1	9
1	9	4	7	3	5	2	6	8
2	8	7	9	1	3	4	5	6
4	5	6	2	7	8	1	9	3
9	1	3	4	5	6	8	7	2

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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G2	S1	A1	S1	N1	I1	A1	5th Letter Triple	RACK 1
S1	N1	E1	C3	C3	E1	I1	2nd Letter Double	RACK 2
K5	B3	O1	C3	S1	S1	O1	Triple Word Score	RACK 3
A1	I1	V4	D2	S1	N1	N1		RACK 4

PAR SCORE 75-85
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

T1	O1	W4	A1	R1	D2	S1	RACK 1 =	61
W4	O1	N1	D2	E1	R1		RACK 2 =	18
G2	E1	L1	L1	E1	D2		RACK 3 =	16
S1	T1	U1	T1	T1	E1	R1	RACK 4 =	64
							JUDD'S TOTAL	159

PAR SCORE 105-115

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

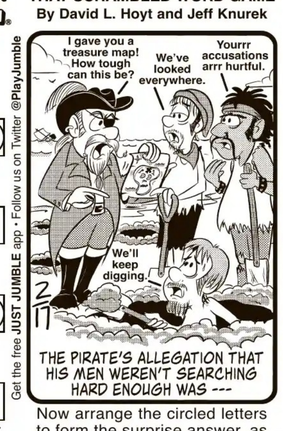
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ZOFER

NBYNU

DOIUTS

DCULED


I gave you a treasure map! How tough can this be?
We've looked everywhere.
Yourrr accusations arrr hurtful.
We'll keep digging.
THE PIRATE'S ALLEGATION THAT HIS MEN WEREN'T SEARCHING HARD ENOUGH WAS ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print your answer here: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: MINCE BLIND ENZYME FOUGHT
Answer: For Noah Webster, publishing the first edition of his dictionary was a — DEFINING MOMENT

HITORI-3138

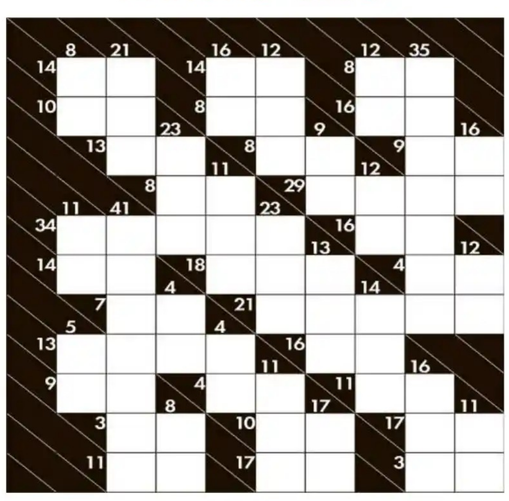
2	5	1	6	8	4	3	7
7	3	6	6	2	1	2	4
6	8	4	7	3	5	1	1
5	1	7	3	4	2	3	6
7	4	3	2	5	6	6	8
3	2	5	8	5	3	1	1
3	7	8	1	2	2	4	5
8	4	1	3	1	5	5	5

SOLUTION TO 3137

7	4	■	8	2	1	6	■
■	1	6	4	■	3	5	8
6	3	4	■	7	■	1	■
4	■	1	3	8	6	■	5
■	5	8	2	4	■	3	7
8	■	3	■	6	7	■	4
3	2	5	7	■	4	8	1
■	6	■	5	3	■	4	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

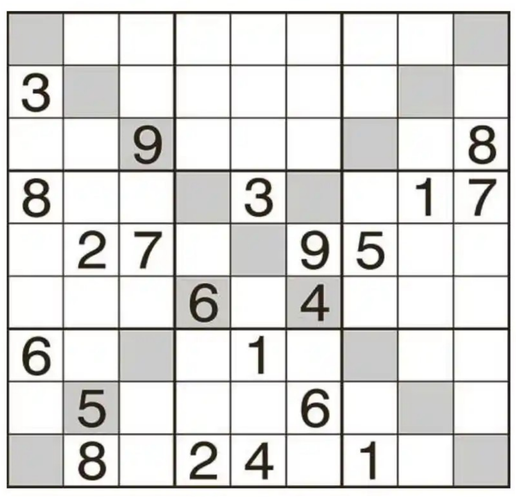
KAKURO- 3138



SOLUTION TO 3137

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3657

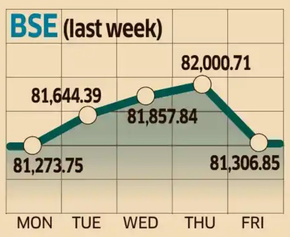


SOLUTION TO 3656

3	7	2	1	6	9	4	5	8
8	1	4	5	2	7	3	9	6
9	5	6	4	3	8	1	2	7
1	6	8	7	9	4	2	3	5
2	3	9	8	5	6	7	4	1
7	4	5	3	1	2	8	6	9
5	8	7	6	4	3	9	1	2
4	2	1	9	7	5	6	8	3
6	9	3	2	8	1	5	7	4

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

BSE (last week)



*Data as of Aug 22

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
MARUTI	11.07%	ITC	-3.18%
HINDUNILVR	5.88%	BEL	-2.60%
M&M	4.20%	LT	-2.22%
BAJAJ FINANCE	3.81%	POWERGRID	-1.84%
TITAN	3.75%	HCL TECH	-1.51%

NSE (last week)

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
MARUTI	10.92%	ITC	-3.20%
NESTLE INDIA	6.75%	BEL	-2.61%
HERO MOTO CO	6.16%	COAL INDIA	-2.60%
HINDUNILVR	6.02%	L&T	-2.21%
BAJAJ AUTO	5.67%	JIO FIN SERV	-2.08%

Sensex (52-week)

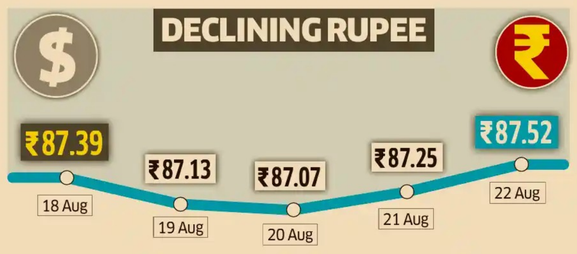
Aug 22, 2024	Aug 22, 2025	
81,053.19	81,306.85	0.31%

Nifty (52-week)

Aug 22, 2024	Aug 22, 2025	
24,811.50	24,870.10	0.24%

10-year Bond yield 6.54%

DECLINING RUPEE



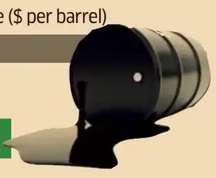
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹87.52	SGD	₹67.83
Pound	₹117.53	Yen (100 units)	₹58.84
Euro	₹101.34		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$67.69*
-0.03%
*Rate as of Aug 22



Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.92 ₹0%
Diesel* ₹90.99 ₹0%

*Rates as of Aug 22 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹26500 - 27700
Arabica Cherry	₹14000 - 16000
Robusta Parchment	₹17000 - 18250
Robusta Cherry	₹11500 - 12900

*Rates as on Aug 22

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹624
Cross Breed (CB)	₹558

*Average rates as on Aug 22

India ranks seventh in global AI innovation race

The UK holds eighth position, followed by Australia and Italy

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

When it comes to the global Artificial Intelligence (AI) innovation race, India holds seventh place with a score of 24. The country has 29 notable AI models and investments in AI stood at $7.25 billion. Interestingly, workforce adoption leads the ranking, with 92% of workers using AI in their daily tasks, according to a new study.

Linkee, an AI-powered link-building automation software company, conducted the study with an aim to identify the countries winning the AI innovation race. It examined five factors - AI patents per capita, the number of AI models, total investments in AI, the share of workers using AI in daily work and the AI job openings per 1 million people.

The United States secures first place in the global AI innovation race with a score of 99, followed by Switzerland (score 66), South Korea (54), China (52), Singapore (32) and Canada (29).

The UK holds eighth position after India. Australia and Italy rank ninth and tenth, respectively.

Vahan Poghosyan, CEO at Linkee, said, "The global AI race isn't just about patents or funding; it reflects which countries are shaping the future of work, innovation, and daily life. Where AI is adopted thoughtfully, it's creating new opportunities, changing industries, and even redefining what skills matter."

He added that understanding these trends is preparing societies for the next decade of change.

In case of job openings for AI-related roles, India has only eight openings per 1 million residents, but better than South Korea which has four job openings. Singapore stands out as a hub for AI careers, offering the highest rate of job openings at 216. Its $1.5 billion investment in the sector, triple that of Switzerland, supports 17 active AI models. On the job, AI has become part of everyday processes, with 88% of employees making use of it in their work.

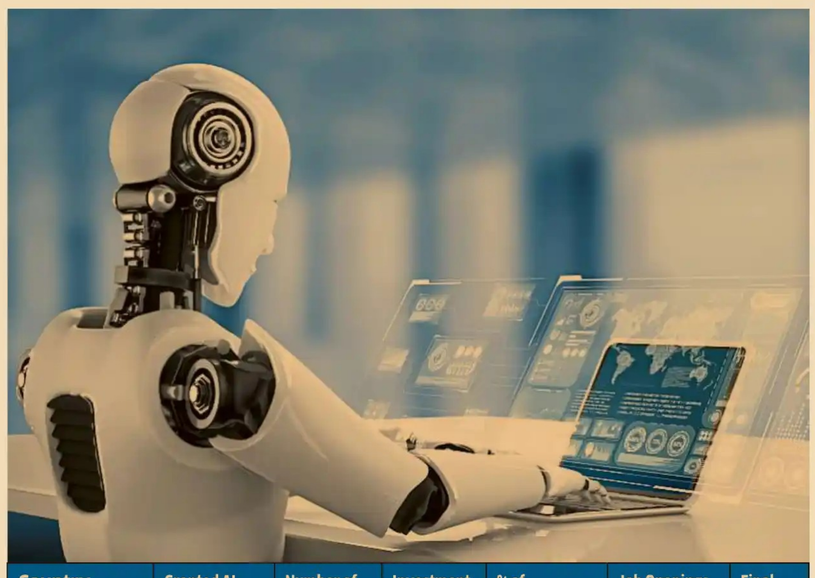
The global AI market is valued at over €130 billion, and is expected to grow to nearly €1.9 trillion by 2030. The study also said the US is the most innovative country in AI with the highest number of AI models created (561 models) and $77.6 billion has been invested in the sector.

With 18 innovations per 1 lakh residents, Switzerland has the highest number of AI patents.

China, which ranks fourth, has produced 196 notable AI models. It has invested $9 billion into AI, and its AI adoption is high across the workforce, with 91% of people using AI in their daily work.

While Canada holds sixth place with a score of 29, the country slightly outpaces Singapore in investment, contributing $1.96 billion to AI, while matching China for patents per person at 6. Canada has rolled out 94 notable AI models, and the job market remains strong with a rate of 72 AI-related positions available. The UK comes in eighth, scoring 16. It holds 140 AI patents, and job opportunities remain strong, with 21 openings per 1 million residents, matching the rate of China.

Australia comes in ninth place, earning a score of 13. The findings pointed out that investment totals $626 million, slightly above Singapore, while 84% of the workforce integrates AI into daily work, 15% higher than in the UK. Italy ranks tenth, finishing off the most AI-innovative countries, with a score of 12. It holds 4 AI patents per 100K people, three more than the UK, and has produced three notable AI models.



Country	Granted AI patents (per 100,000 inhabitants)	Number of Notable AI Models	Investment in AI (USD)	% of Knowledge Workers Using Generative AI	Job Openings for AI-related Roles per 1M	Final Score
United States	5	561	77.65B	71%	40	99
Switzerland	18	43	565M	82%	32	66
South Korea	17	24	2.61B	73%	4	54
China	6	196	9.12B	91%	21	52
Singapore	1	17	1.53B	88%	216	32
Canada	6	94	1.96B	62%	72	29
India	2	29	7.25B	92%	8	24
United Kingdom	1	140	4.44B	69%	21	16
Australia	0	7	626M	84%	30	13
Italy	4	3	167M	60%	31	12

Beer consumption set to double every 3 years

Micro-breweries will drive the growth in consumption

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

India's per capita consumption of beer is set to double every three years thanks to a boom in craft beer sold at micro-breweries. Currently, the per capita beer consumption is pegged at 2 litres, and has stagnated at this level for many years due to regulatory hurdles, taxation issues and age limits.

Bengaluru, which is hailed as the beer capital in the country, will be once again leading the growth in the industry. The city, which is home to 86 out of 600 micro-breweries in the country, is likely to witness ten times growth in the number of micro-breweries in the next eight years, thereby leading the growth in the beer consumption, according to Shivkumar Eswaran, Chairman of Indian Chamber of Commerce, South India Council and Chairman of Canadian Crystalline Water India Limited.

By 2033, he said, India will have an estimated 5,000 micro-breweries, and the craft beer segment sales is expected to witness an exponential growth of 23.4% CAGR to touch $33.3 billion from $4.7 billion recorded in 2024. Micro-breweries will account for about 45% of the total sales in the country. Also, the per capita consumption of beer would be in the range of 8 litres in that year, he said.

"The per capita consumption in India is about two litres compared to a global average of 30 litres. In India, the age restriction needs to be eased to 16 years for consumption of beer with less than 4.5% alcohol content. We also need a uniform excise duty on beer and alcohol across the states to give a push to the industry," Eswaran said.

Another reason for low consumption of beer in India is that the country is predominantly a consumer of hard liquor like whisky, brandy, gin, and vodka unlike the US and Europe where beer and wine consumption is higher. Beer is considered a non-alcoholic drink in those countries, he said.

However, the trend is slowly changing in India, and the awareness is growing towards the consumption of beer and wine. The rapid growth in the opening of micro-breweries across the country is adding to the steady growth in the beer consumption, Eswaran said.

According to beer industry leader United Breweries, consumer preferences are changing with rising disposable incomes, urbanisation, and a young population. A notable trend is the increasing demand for low and no-alcohol beers, particularly among Gen Z and millennials who prioritise health and moderation. Brands like Heineken 0.0 are gaining traction in metropolitan areas, prompting companies to innovate to meet this demand without compromising the traditional beer experience.

Eswaran added that unlike bottled beer which comes in limited varieties, micro-breweries offer a large variety of beers. There are at least 6-8 types of flavours offered by each micro-brewery in India. All of them together provide around 180 varieties of beer to consumers, and this variety is attracting a newer set of consumers, he said.

All these factors are contributing to the growth of the beer industry in India. The value of beer sold in India is expected to witness a massive growth from the present $5.4 billion to $802 billion by 2033, Eswaran said.

GST rate cut speculation hits car sales

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Speculation about reduction in goods and services tax (GST) has impacted sales of cars as customers are postponing the purchase in anticipation of reduction in price, Venkatram Mamillapalle, Managing Director and CEO, Renault India, said on Sunday.

"Everybody's anticipation is that if GST goes down, the value of the car will also go down. So those people who can wait, they are waiting," Mamillapalle told reporters at a company event.

He said the time gap between the announcement and the possible rate gap has impacted auto sales. "It's a good and positive thing for the public...Response would have been much much better for both OEMs and customers if the time gap was less," he said.

The announcement about the GST reforms and reduction in rates was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the 79th Independence Day.

The GST Council, which is mandated to take decisions on the GST-related matters including rate cuts and reforms, is scheduled to meet on September 3-4 in New Delhi. During the meeting, the Council is widely speculated to agree on a rate rationalisation proposal to bring down the majority of the products in the 28% tax slab to a lower slab of 18%.

At present, cars are taxed at 28% standard GST plus cess. There is wide speculation of a 10 percentage point reduction in the tax on small cars. This means a car, which is currently priced at Rs 7 lakh may get cheaper by upto Rs 70,000. However, it will depend on input tax credit and other factors.

On the outlook for the auto industry, Mamillapalle said the GST reduction would give a much needed push to the auto sector.

He said Renault India has sufficient capacity to produce additional vehicles if the lower taxes result in higher demands. "We are operating at 50%, so there are no issues on capacity," he said.

Renault India on Sunday launched 'New Kiger' a sub-four metre sports utility vehicle (SUV). The fully loaded Turbo variants of Kiger - Techno and Emotion are priced between Rs 9.99 lakhs and Rs 11.29 Lakhs (ex-showroom), while the more accessible naturally aspirated engine variants are available between Rs 6.29 lakhs and Rs 9.14 lakhs (ex-showroom).

"Renault Kiger has shaped expectations in the compact SUV segment with its aesthetic design, modern details, and bold stance combined with the lightweight CMFA+ platform," said Francisco Hidalgo, vice president, sales and marketing, Renault India.

After SBI, BoI tags RCom, Anil Ambani as fraud

NEW DELHI, PTI: After the State Bank of India, Bank of India has classified the loan account of insolvent Reliance Communications as fraudulent and named its former director, tycoon Anil Ambani, citing alleged fund diversion in 2016, according to a regulatory filing.

Anil Ambani

State-owned Bank of India granted a Rs 700 crore loan in August 2016 to Reliance Communications for its ongoing capital and operational expenditure and repayment of existing liabilities. Half of the sanctioned amount disbursed in October 2016 was invested in a fixed deposit, which was not permitted as per the sanction letter, according to the bank's letter that RCom disclosed in a stock exchange filing.

Opportunities for growth

As consumer awareness and accessibility improves, the industry is well-positioned to drive higher penetration, particularly in emerging urban centres and Tier-2 & Tier-3 cities.

The Indian beer market is segmented into Strong and Mild Beers. Alongside this, there is a pronounced trend towards premiumisation, with premium beer segments expected to outpace overall category growth. Despite challenges such as regulatory hurdles and taxation issues, the Indian beer industry presents substantial opportunities for growth and innovation. Companies that can adeptly navigate these complexities, embrace innovation, and align with evolving consumer preferences are well-positioned for success, United Breweries said in its annual report.

OFFSHORE EDGE

'This GCC wave is good for us as a country'

Last week, Availity India, the India GCC (Global Capability Centre) of the largest healthcare information network in the US, expanded its India footprint by opening a new facility in Bengaluru. The company has over 20,000 clients in the US market, and this year, the company doubled its workforce in India. Availity, which is growing between 12% and 16% y-o-y in terms of revenue, connects with more than 95% of payers, over three million providers, and more than 2,000 trading partners in the US. In an interaction with **Uma Kannan** of *DH*, **Vybhava Srinivasan**, India Head and Managing Director and **Sean Keneally**, Chief Operating Officer at Availity said with the opening of the new facility, India will serve as an important technology hub supporting global operations. Edited excerpts:

Vybhava Srinivasan

How are you looking at the Indian market for GCCs?

Sean Keneally: The whole outsourcing world has gone through a lot of metamorphosis over the last 15 years. When I joined this organisation, we were a largely domestic organisation with a couple of service-based functions located in India. One of the unique things about Availity is having operations and technology teams working together. Our product development team is here and our technology, all of them working collaboratively together.

Vybhava Srinivasan: The leadership has always viewed India as a strategic asset. We are globally 2,000 people.

With this expansion in Bengaluru, what are your hiring plans?

Sean: In April 2023, we were 90 people, and by the end of this year we will be touching 400 in India, and by next year we expect this number to double. We believe in hiring the best talent.

Vybhava: We will hire people that will move the needle in making healthcare better, which means more people that are creative and are able to innovate. We believe there's a strong amount of that type of talent available at the scale here.

We're looking at a lot of infrastructure resources to support Availity's operations itself 24/7, we've become very large in the US now. We're looking at talent that will help us in implementing our client pipeline. The talent requirement is now across the breadth, but critical to us will continue to be engineering and product talent.

There is a GCC wave across the country. Whether this wave will continue for years to come?

Vybhava: As long as we continue to have a pipeline of skilled talent, this will continue. That's the only reason that anybody across the world evaluates India, because we have the workforce with the right talent available at a significant amount of scale with reasonable English-speaking skills, which many countries don't have. I think it will continue as long as, at least for the foreseeable future. Almost everybody that you talk of in the big names gives you GCC as a service, BOT models, there are different variations today available in the market space. So, you will see some of the service sector also shifting towards supporting this propulsion growth that's going on.

This wave is good for us as a country for a couple of reasons. We are now seeing talent, at least in the technology segment, being remunerated at a significantly different scale from what an average service provider did. There's significant competition for talent and added to that is very favourable government policies. Given there's strong government support, there is availability of talent, and there is a need for the world to invest somewhere to get the talent, I think this is going to continue for some more time.

How are you making use of Artificial Intelligence? It is said automation will take over some jobs, especially in the healthcare segment. What is your take on this?

Sean: We think of AI in three different facets. The first one is our products. What products are we developing that we're bringing to market that are AI born and raised -AI first. Number two is making our associates more effective and efficient. And some of these technologies, we're not going to build them, we're going to buy them. We've eliminated 30% of the average time an associate spends on a phone call by doing post-call transcription and also documentation retrieval through knowledge management systems. The third is how do we actually make our customers better with AI (insights and analytics.) I don't think jobs will be eliminated. We are putting tools and technology through AI to help simplify the administrative task.

Sean Keneally

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Dixon Tech
(ID: DIXON)
BUY
Upside +32%**
Last close ₹16,894
Target: ₹22,300*

VMM
(ID: VMM)
BUY
Upside +10%**
Last close ₹150
Target: ₹165*

HAL
(ID: HAL)
BUY
Upside +29%**
Last close ₹4,480
Target: ₹5,800*

Apollo Hospital
(ID: APOLLOHOSP)
BUY
Upside +14%**
Last close ₹7,930
Target: ₹9,010*

Aditya Birla Capital
(ID: ABCAPITAL)
BUY
Upside +14%**
Last close ₹286
Target: ₹325*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

Why smart money is flooding into Flexicap Funds

ARIHANT BARDIA
CIO AND FOUNDER
VALTRUST

Flexicap funds attracted over Rs 30,000 crore in the first six months of 2025 - a significant milestone reflecting changing investor preferences and growing understanding that rigid investment approaches may not be optimal in today's dynamic markets.

In the first half of 2025, large-cap stocks delivered 6.98% returns, mid-caps managed 4.25%, and small-caps delivered just 0.83%. This divergence highlights the challenge investors face when locked into specific market-cap categories. Well-managed Flexicap funds capitalised on these rotations, with several top-performing schemes delivering returns exceeding 20% in recent months. These aren't lucky breaks - they're the result of managers who can move money where opportunities actually exist.

In September 2020, SEBI issued a circular revising allocation rules for multi-cap funds, mandating they allocate at least 75% of total assets to equity instruments with a minimum of 25% exposure to large-cap, mid-cap, and small-cap equities each. This regulatory shift fundamentally changed the mutual fund landscape. Before this mandate, funds labeled as "large-cap" could invest significantly in mid and small-cap stocks without restrictions. SEBI's October 2017 categorisation guidelines aimed to ensure funds remained true to their names, bringing much-needed clarity but also constraints.

The creation of Flexicap funds as a separate category was SEBI's solution to this rigidity. Flexicap funds must invest at least 65% of their assets in equity and equity- related instruments, but unlike multi-cap funds, they have no minimum allocation requirements across market capitalisations. In some periods, multi-cap funds have edged out flexicap funds, particularly when large-caps led the rally and flexicap managers chose to stay underweight in that segment. But this occasional underperformance is the price of flexibility, not a flaw. This regulatory paradox demonstrates that even flexibility can have drawbacks when market leadership concentrates in segments where fund allocation is constrained. Small and mid-cap stocks create real wealth when timing aligns. A small pharmaceutical company can multiply investments 10x with drug approval; a mid-cap tech firm can explode with major contracts. The challenge lies in timing these opportunities correctly.

Flexicap funds solve this puzzle professionally. When small-caps are cheap and unloved, managers can load up. When they become overheated, managers rotate into safer large-caps. I's professional portfolio management bound by transparency requirements without rigid allocation constraints.

Markets today operate with increased complexity, where sector leadership and market-cap preferences shift more frequently than previous decades. Technology stocks may outperform one quarter while healthcare leads the next. Traditional fixed- allocation strategies often miss these rotational opportunities.

Currently, 39 Flexicap schemes manage Rs 4.35 lakh crore, making them the second-largest equity category after sectoral funds. However, sectoral funds are concentrated theme bets, while Flexicap funds offer diversified plays across entire market opportunity sets.

Investor interest, reflected in the Rs 31,532 crore inflow, signals recognition of one key truth: market leadership rotates faster than ever. From growth to value, domestic to export-led themes, Flexicap funds offer the ability to navigate these transitions without being boxed into a single style or sector.

For investors, the goal isn't to time every move or bet on the right segment, i's to stay invested in a strategy that adapts dynamically. Flexicap funds provide that adaptive edge, making them well-suited for long-term portfolios, especially when volatility and uncertainty are part of the equation.

When benchmark indices fell 10% from all-time highs recently, flexicap managers saw opportunities. Quality small and mid-cap stocks became available at discounted prices. While retail investors fled to fixed deposits, these managers selectively bought oversold segments.

For advisors and investors alike, Flexicap funds stand out by being able to lean in when others retreat.

Mcap of 8 of top-10 most valued firms jumps Rs 1.72 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms jumped Rs 1,72,148.89 crore last week, with Reliance Industries leading the pack with the maximum gain, in line with a bullish trend in domestic equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 709.19 points or 0.87%.

From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever Ltd, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Bajaj Finance were the gainers.

However, HDFC Bank and State Bank of India faced erosion in their valuation.

Reliance Industries added Rs 48,107.94 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 19,07,131.37 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Hindustan Unilever jumped Rs 34,280.54 crore to Rs 6,17,672.30 crore.

Bharti Airtel's valuation surged Rs 33,899.02 crore to Rs 11,02,159.94 crore, and that of Bajaj Finance zoomed Rs 20,413.95 crore to Rs 5,55,961.39 crore.

The mcap of Infosys edged higher by Rs 16,693.93 crore to Rs 6,18,004.12 crore, and that of TCS climbed Rs 11,487.42 crore to Rs 11,04,837.29 crore.

ICICI Bank added Rs 6,443.84 crore to its market valuation, which stood at Rs 10,25,426.19 crore.

The market valuation of LIC went up by Rs 822.25 crore to Rs 5,62,703.42 crore.

However, the mcap of HDFC Bank eroded by Rs 20,040.7 crore to Rs 15,08,346.39 crore.

The market valuation of State Bank of India declined by Rs 9,784.46 crore to Rs 7,53,310.70 crore.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, LIC and Bajaj Finance.

Molbio Diagnostics files IPO papers with Sebi

PANAJI, PTI: Goa-based Molbio Diagnostics Limited, backed by Temasek and Motilal Oswal Private Equity, has filed draft papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO).

According to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), the IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 200 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 1.25 crore equity shares by existing shareholders.

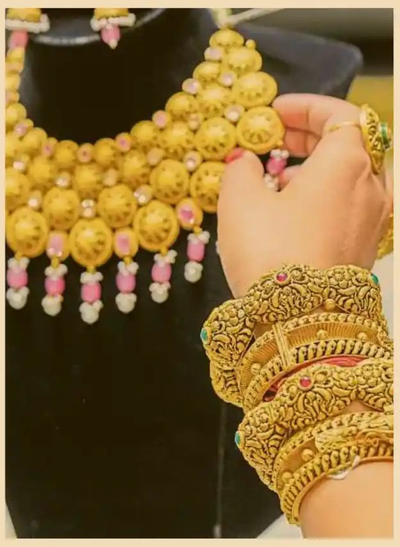
The company plans to utilise Rs 99.3 crore from the net proceeds for setting up infrastructure for a new Research and Development facility, a Centre of Excellence and connected office space. Another Rs 73.5 crore will go towards the purchase of plant and machinery for its manufacturing units in Goa and Visakhapatnam, while the balance will be used for general corporate purposes, a spokesperson said.

Founded in 2000, Molbio Diagnostics is engaged in point-of-care molecular diagnostics for over 30 diseases, including tuberculosis, COVID-19, HIV, HPV and Hepatitis B & C. Its flagship 'Truenat' platform, patented in more than 100 countries, is a battery-operated portable PCR platform designed to deliver test results within an hour in resource-limited settings.

Bringing gold jewellery from abroad? Know your limits

A limited quantity of gold jewellery can be carried as per customs rules

PRABHAKAR K S



Inbound travellers are subject to stringent customs checks at all international airports in India. The passengers before retrieval of their baggage from the conveyor belts shall be required to undergo immigration and customs clearance. For this purpose, there are two windows – the Green channel for passengers having non-dutiable goods or items and the Red channel for passengers having dutiable or prohibited goods or items. Onus on the passengers to declare a correct description of goods being carried with him/her in a prescribed form upon arrival. Failure to comply, providing incorrect information, hiding or walking through the green channel with dutiable goods results in not only the confiscation of them, but also liability for heavy fines, penalties, arrest and prosecution under the customs rules.

Who can bring jewellery/import gold as baggage?

An Indian passenger residing abroad for over a year is allowed to bring jewellery, free of duty, in his/her baggage up to 20 grams with a value cap of Rs 50,000 (in case of male passenger) and up to 40 grams with a value cap of Rs 1 lakh (in case of female passenger). Children are allowed to bring 20/40 grams of gold with a value cap of Rs 50,000 and 1 lakh, depending on the gender and having lived abroad for over a year. In the case of excess of the allowances, they shall be subject to applicable customs duty. Further, a duty-free allowance can be availed only for plain gold jewellery and not for studded diamonds, gems, or other forms of gold.

An eligible person, that is any passenger of Indian Origin, holding a valid Indian passport who is coming to India after a period of not less than six months of stay abroad, and short visits, if any made by the passenger during the aforesaid period of six months shall be ignored if the total duration of stay on such visits does not exceed thirty days, are allowed to import gold in baggage subject to applicable duty. Additional conditions are – the duty shall be paid in convertible foreign currency, the weight of gold (including ornaments) should not exceed 10 kg per passenger, among others. However, a portion of this allowance is exempt from duty.

In case of a non-eligible passenger, the applicable duty will be much higher than the rate applicable to an eligible passenger.

How and when to declare jewellery gold?

Submission of a duly filled baggage declaration form (Form 1) at customs is mandatory only for Red Channel passengers or passengers carrying dutiable or prohibited goods or those who exceed their duty-free allowance. Alternatively, they may use the official ATITHI mobile app and declare in advance, even before arrival. The Form 1 is required to be filled and duly signed by inbound passenger providing his/her name, passport number, nationality, date of arrival, flight number, number of baggage (including hand baggage), name of the country coming from, countries visited in last six months, total value of dutiable goods being imported in Indian rupees, list of articles – prohibited articles, jewellery (over free allowance), gold bullion, among others.

Are gold coins, bars, and biscuits treated alike?

No. Gold coins, bars, and biscuits are distinct from jewellery, due to their higher level of purity and resale value, they are considered investments. On the other hand, gold jewellery is a traditional, personal adornment, comes with lower purity and lower resale value. Hence, gold coins and others attract regular customs duty.

Are personal jewellery and jewellery the same?

No. The Supreme Court, in a case, held that jewellery worn or carried by tourists for personal use qualifies as 'personal effect', and its value is irrelevant. The Apex court, in another incident, affirmed the Delhi High Court's ruling held that a clear distinction between personal jewellery and jewellery must be maintained.

The Delhi High Court very recently held that Customs Authorities must differentiate bona fide personal jewellery and jewellery. The court has rejected the adjudicating authority's error in rejecting the personal jewellery claim purely on the grounds of purity, weight or value of the confiscated gold jewellery.

To sum up

From the above, it is clear that carrying gold jewellery to India is legal, provided strict adherence to the limits under customs rules and guidelines. Thus, onus rests on the returning Indians and inbound travellers to have an update of Indian customs laws, declaration of gold jewellery above the prescribed limit to the authorities, proper documentation along with gold appraisal from abroad and paying applicable duty helps to avoid unnecessary complications and ensures legal and hassle-free entry to India.

(The writer is Founder & CEO, Shree Tax Chambers)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Markets await Q1 GDP data, US decision on tariffs

Uncertainty is prevailing over Trump's move to raise tariffs to 50%

SIDDAHARTHA KHEMKA

The Indian equities market is poised to sustain its positive momentum this week, underpinned by strong domestic macroeconomic factors and coordinated fiscal and monetary support. Key catalysts include the announcement of GST 2.0 reforms, a sovereign rating upgrade, RBI's liquidity support, a monsoon-driven consumption revival, and the forthcoming festive season demand. Market participants will remain attentive to developments regarding the US 25% secondary tariffs on Indian goods, to be effective on August 27, 2025, as any deferral could significantly bolster investor confidence. Additionally, upcoming GDP data releases from both India and the US will be closely monitored to assess broader market sentiment.

Last week, Nifty 50 ended with gains of 239 points at 24,870, up 0.97%, continuing its positive momentum driven by strong domestic cues. The broader market indices also soared in the green as Nifty Midcap100 and Nifty Smallcap100 were up 2% and 2.12% respectively. Amongst sectors, Auto and FMCG formed a part of the top gainers as their indices were up 5% and 2% respectively, largely driven by the approval of the new GST reforms.

Following the announcement of second-gen GST reforms by the Indian Prime Minister, the Group of Ministers (GoM) approved scrapping the existing four-rate GST structure in favor of a simplified dual-rate regime of 5% and 18%. This policy shift is expected to benefit sectors such as autos, cement, consumer durables (ACs, electronics), FMCG, hotels with (sub- 7,500, room rate), retail footwear, logistics, insurance (subject to health premium cuts), and quick commerce.

The RBI's August MPC minutes indicate a cautiously optimistic stance on inflation, highlighting expectations of a near-term decline driven by easing food prices. However, the committee maintains a prudent approach, closely monitoring inflation transmission and potential upside risks before considering any further policy action.

The July FOMC meeting saw a rare split, with two Fed governors advocating a 25 bps rate cut—the first such dissent since 1993. This development, coupled with a softer US jobs report, has reinforced market expectations of a potential rate cut in the September meeting, a move that could have positive spillover effects for emerging markets including India.

On the sectoral front, we are positive on hospital companies in India, as they maintained a stable momentum in 1QFY26, registering 16.5% year-on-year revenue growth. EBITDA growth moderated slightly to 20.5%, reflecting capacity additions and improved operational efficiency. Over FY25-27, listed hospital companies plan to add 14,000 beds, a 35% increase over current capacity of 39,000 beds. With aggregate occupancy at 59%, there is ample room for further improvement, which bodes well for sustained sector performance.

Recent diplomatic engagements have strengthened India's geopolitical and economic outlook. China's agreement to ease export restrictions on critical inputs such as fertilizers, rare earths, and tunnel boring machines, during border talks will ease supply bottlenecks. Meanwhile, India-Russia discussions in Moscow focused on boosting bilateral trade in sectors like agriculture, pharma, and textiles and expanding cooperation, underscoring India's growing geopolitical partnerships.

The announcement by US President Donald Trump to double tariffs on Indian goods to 50%, effective August 27, 2025, has introduced near-term uncertainty, though it is primarily geopolitically driven. While the move poses a potential headwind, investor sentiment remains cautiously optimistic amid signs of progress in US-Russia peace negotiations, raising hopes of a rollback. On the domestic front, the Indian government's temporary exemption of import duty on cotton (August 19–September 30) offers timely support to the garment sector, helping offset external pressures and sustain competitiveness.

OIL SECURITY

'India must lead in developing strategic reserves of petroleum products'

G GIRIDHAR PRABHU

Since 1992, India has transformed its petroleum refinery structure, producing fuels that meet global standards. Mangaluru and its suburbs are part of this progress.

Karnataka sugar mills have successfully produced ethanol from sugarcane. India has mastered blending, ensuring engines run lighter and smoother, up to 20%.

Karnataka also hosts Strategic Petroleum Reserves, which ensure a minimum supply of crude to refineries in both anticipated and unforeseen situations. When foreign interests once requested exclusive access, this was declined in favour of national interest—showing India's maturity as a democracy with strategic depth.

India must lead in developing Strategic Reserves of Petroleum Products, with commercial interest, citizen participation, and institutional research. Citizens should help expand this into a Bharat Petroleum Products Reserve (BPPR), supported by central and state entities, utilities, and local bodies.

The BPPR should be managed by a government legal entity within SEZ status. It would provide flexibility for international financing, forward trading, and storage.

The domestic market has 30 crore consumers across the petroleum chain. Petroleum blending needs to expand into 70 independent Ethanol Blending Hubs and Complexes instead of transporting ethanol to refineries.

Each hub should have a unique identity tied to farmers and producers. MRPL and ISPRL in Mangaluru, with Delhi counterparts, can identify optimal sites for port-based blending with imported Ethanol.

The Ministry of Petroleum with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry can declare MRPL's SEZ tankage as delivery points for forward trading denominated in international currencies. Railway tracks can connect SEZ territory to blending centres. All petroleum companies can use the 70 hubs as trading markets before duties and taxes are applied. The sites should be custom bonded and secure.

Products must be capable of physical delivery, with currencies freely convertible in the SEZ and subsequently in the DTA.

The investment plan should include:

- Tankage of optimum capacities at 1,200+ locations nationwide at rural railway stations with third- and fourth-line loops.
- Partly underground and overground tankage for convenience and optimisation to deliverable.
- Rolling stock under the Own Your Wagon Scheme of Indian Railways so that stocks kept in motion also match immediate daily consumption.

The cost of maintaining reserves should not depend heavily on the Union Budget. Public participation is crucial.

The Reserve Bank of India and the Forward Markets Commission could allow citizens to own petroleum product certificates—duty-free, tradable, and redeemable at petrol pumps. Taxes would be collected at exit gates of hubs. Investors could earn around 1% monthly returns. India's recent success in developing its digital currency will assist commercial banks in managing the cash flows.

The current appetite for public equity can enable bonds worth at least 1,80,000 crore to be mobilised, with inventory as collateral, making the reserve self-sustaining. Oil company Executive Directors will then manage 90 days of stock without losses from evaporation or storage.

A crisis is an unforeseen event. The BPPR must be built on ethanol blending. Karnataka and Mangaluru pioneered E20 as a consumer-recognised symbol. Refiners can also launch E5, E10, and E15, each with export potential to East Africa.

All African nations—from Egypt to South Africa—can serve as investment zones for petroleum products. Distribution firms can use coupons. For example, a trucker may buy Diesel E20 at a discount, with delivery after 90 days. Citizens could invest in these coupons, saving 3–5%. A prepaid card system, integrated with digital payments, would simplify payouts.

A Farmers' Fund of 300,000 crore can be floated by the Central Government in lieu of urea subsidies. These would generate yields of 9% to 12% based on the real economy.

A National Convergence Centre can be established at Nandikur Railway Station for effectiveness. Employment in petroleum-linked and railway-linked sectors will grow. It is crucial to have institutional and public endorsement of Mangaluru, Karnataka, as a petroleum products reference price point. The reference price would be international and of plural character.

In the short term, importing 1–2.5 million tonnes of ethanol per annum from Brazil, USA, and other nations that generate surpluses would help. Strategic storage practices should converge with commercial use near consumption and transport networks. This would free resources in urban areas.

(The writer was President of the Kanara Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2001–2003) and promoted the Mangalore SEZ with the Karnataka State Government, ONGC, and its subsidiaries.)

Israel strikes Yemen after Houthi attacks

Iran-backed rebels warn ops in support of Gaza will continue

CAIRO, AP

Israeli airstrikes hit Yemen's capital on Sunday, just days after the Houthi rebels fired a missile toward Israel, the rebels said, the latest Israeli attack targeting the Iranian-backed group.

The Houthi media office said the strikes hit multiple areas across the capital of Sanaa, including a power planet and a gas station. Residents reported hearing loud sounds of explosions in different areas, including close to the presidential palace.

The reported strikes were the first to hit Yemen since a week ago, when Israel said it targeted energy infrastructure it believed was used by the rebels.

Israel did not immediately confirmed Sunday's attack.

The Iran-backed Houthis have launched missiles and drones toward Israel and targeted ships in the Red Sea for more than 22 months. They say they are carrying out the attacks in solidarity with the Palestinians amid the war in the Gaza Strip.

Sanaa residents told The Associated Press they heard loud explosions close to a closed military academy and the presidential palace. They said they could see smoke plumes near Sabeen Square, a central gathering place in the capital.

"The sound of explosions were very strong," said Hussein Mohamed, a Yemeni resident, who lives close to the presidential palace.

Ahmed al-Mekhlafy, another resident, also said he felt the sheer force of the strikes. "The house was rocked, and the windows were shattered," he told the AP over the phone.

Nasruddin Amer, deputy head of the Houthi media office, claimed the Israeli strikes won't deter the rebels, and vowed to continue their attacks on Israel.

"Our military operations supporting Gaza won't stop, God willing, unless the aggression is stopped, and the siege is lifted," he wrote on social media.

The strike comes after the Houthis claimed they launched newly equipped missiles toward Israel, including targeting the country's largest airport, on Friday. There was no reported damage or injuries in Israel from that attack. Israel's military said it fragmented mid-air after several attempts to intercept it.

A photojournalist takes a picture of smoke after an Israeli air strike on Yemen's Huthi-held capital Sanaa on Sunday. AFP

Indian envoy discusses 'fair' trade with US lawmakers

Highlights New Delhi's growing hydrocarbon purchases from US

NEW YORK, PTI

Indian envoy Vinay Mohan Kwatra discussed "fair, balanced and mutually beneficial trade ties" with US lawmakers amid ongoing tariff tensions between New Delhi and Washington.

The Indian Ambassador has met four US lawmakers in the last 24 hours and 23 since August 9, as revealed by his social media posts.

Kwatra met Congressman Rep Joe Courtney, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, on Saturday (local time) and thanked him for supporting the bilateral partnership between the two countries.

"Highlighted our perspectives on trade and economic cooperation, including the need for fair, balanced and mutually beneficial trade ties," Kwatra posted on social media.

He also had a "productive discussion" with Congressman Gabe Amo, Vice Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Democrats.

He appreciated Amo's support for the bilateral ties and "shared perspectives on the importance of fair, balanced and mutually beneficial trade engagements," said his social media post.

He also had a similar conversation with Congressman Jared Moskowitz, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Intelligence (HFAC).

In his conversation with Congressman Ben Cline, the Indian envoy highlighted his country's growing hydrocarbon purchases from the US.

"Had a productive conversation with @RepBenCline. Thanked him for his support to the bilateral partnership," Kwatra posted.

"We discussed the importance of fair, balanced and mutually beneficial trade ties," Kwatra added.

Kwatra also highlighted "India's growing hydrocarbon purchases from the US as an important component of our energy security."

The series of meetings comes amid strain in India-US relations after US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs totalling 50 per cent on India. This includes 25 per cent for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil that will come into effect from August 27.

Defending its purchase of Russian crude oil, India has been maintaining that its energy procurement is driven by national interest and market dynamics.

India turned to purchasing Russian oil sold at a discount after Western countries imposed sanctions on Moscow and shunned its supplies over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

India will keep buying oil where it gets 'best deal': Envoy to Russia

MOSCOW, PTI: Indian companies will continue buying oil from wherever they get the "best deal", India's envoy to Russia Vinay Kumar has said, asserting that New Delhi will continue taking measures which protect its "national interest".

In an interview Kumar said that New Delhi's priority is ensuring energy security of the country's 1.4 billion people.

His remarks come amid US criticism of India's purchase of discounted Russian crude. Stressing that trade takes place on a "commercial basis", Kumar said, "Indian companies will continue buying from wherever they get the best deal. So that's what the current situation is."...We have clearly stated that our objective is energy security of 1.4 billion people of India and India's cooperation with Russia, as of several other countries, has helped to bring about stability in the oil market" the report quoted him as saying.

Kyiv strikes Moscow's nuclear plant

MOSCOW, PTI

Russia accused Ukraine Sunday of launching drone attacks that sparked a fire at a nuclear power plant in its western Kursk region overnight, as Ukraine celebrated 34 years since its independence.

Russian officials said several power and energy facilities were targeted in the overnight strikes. The fire at the nuclear facility was quickly extinguished with no injuries reported, according to the plant's press service on Telegram. While the attack damaged a transformer, radiation levels remained within normal ranges.

The United Nations' nuclear watchdog said it was aware of media reports that a transformer at the plants had caught fire "due to military activity," but hadn't received independent confirmation. It said its director-general, Rafael Mariano Grossi, said that "every nuclear facility must be protected at all times."

Ukraine did not immediately comment on the alleged attack.

Firefighters also responded to a blaze at the port of Ust-Luga in Russia's Leningrad region, home to a major fuel export terminal. The regional governor said approximately 10 Ukrainian drones were shot down, with debris igniting the fire.

Russia's Defence Ministry claimed its air defences intercepted 95 Ukrainian drones over Russian territory overnight into Sunday.

Russia fired 72 drones and decoys, along with a cruise missile, into Ukraine overnight into Sunday, Ukraine's air force said. Of these, 48 drones were shot down or jammed.

The incidents occurred as Ukraine marked independence day, commemorating its 1991 declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (L) shakes hands with Prime Minister of Canada Mark Carney during their meeting prior to the talks in Kyiv on Sunday. AFP

US envoy visits Ukraine

US President Donald Trump's envoy Keith Kellogg attended Ukraine's independence celebrations Sunday in Kyiv, as the push to end the war appeared to have stalled, with Ukraine and Russia trading accusations of hampering the peace efforts, reports AFP.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

An Afghan child looks out from inside a restaurant in the Fayzabad district of Badakhshan province. AFP

Over 20,000 evacuated as floods worsen in Pakistan's Punjab

▶ Around 20,000 people have been evacuated from flood-hit districts in Pakistan's Punjab province over the last 24 hours even as heavy rains and rising river levels are forecast for the next 48 hours, officials said on Sunday, reports PTI from Lahore.

"People from Kasur, Okara, Pakpattan, Bahawalnagar and Vehari have been moved to safety after several villages submerged under floodwater," Farooq Ahmad, spokesperson for Punjab Emergency Services Rescue 1122, said in a statement.

The areas from where about 20,000 people have been evacuated since Saturday are adjacent to the Indus, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Jhelum rivers, he said.

"The evacuation of populations settled in the riverbeds of the Sutlej and Ravi has been completed," Ahmad added.

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said emergency operations were underway across multiple districts as a fresh monsoon spell is forecast till August 27.

The Sutlej River has reached a high flood level at Ganda Singh Wala. "The situation at Ganda Singh Wala is critical and expected to persist for the next 48 hours," the PDMA warned, adding that water levels in the Indus at Tarbela and Kalabagh are also rising.

Criminals in UK to face pub bans

▶ Criminals will be barred from pubs, concerts and sports matches under new sentencing powers widening the scope of punishments unveiled by the UK government on Sunday, reports PTI from London.

Judges in the country will be able to curtail offenders' freedoms with driving limits, travel bans and restriction zones confining them into specific areas as part of the new measures. The changes will toughen up community punishments to deter reoffending and force offenders back onto the straight-and-narrow, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) said. "Widening the range of punishments available to judges is part of our Plan for Change to cut crime and make streets safer," said UK Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood.

"When criminals break society's rules, they must be punished. Those serving their sentences in the community must have their freedom restricted there too," she said.

South Korea tells China it wants to normalise ties: Reports

SEOUL, REUTERS: South Korea is hoping to normalise relations with China that have been strained in recent years, the leader of a high-level delegation from Seoul said during a visit to Beijing on Sunday, Yonhap News Agency reported.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung sent the envoys to his country's main trading partner as he travels to Washington to meet U.S. President Donald Trump.

Former assembly speaker Park Byeong-seug, the head of the delegation, met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and handed over a letter from Lee to Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Diplomatic ties between the two countries have improved since a 2017 dispute over South Korea's deployment of a U.S. missile defence system, which Beijing opposed.

Trump clashes with Democrats as he expands National Guard plans

WASHINGTON, AFP: Donald Trump threatened to deploy National Guard troops Sunday to yet another Democratic stronghold, the Maryland city of Baltimore, as the US president seeks to expand his crackdown on crime and immigration.

Donald Trump

The Republican's latest online rant about an "out of control, crime-ridden" city comes as Democratic state leaders -- including Maryland Governor Wes Moore -- line up to berate Trump on a high-profile political stage.

Trump this month deployed the National Guard to streets of Washington, in a widely criticized show of force the president said amounts to a federal takeover of US capital policing.

In June he controversially ordered nearly 5,000 troops to Los Angeles -- ostensibly to quell protests against immigration enforcement raids -- triggering ferocious opposition from California Governor Gavin Newsom, widely seen as a potential 2028 presidential hopeful.

And US media is reporting that the Trump administration also is planning an unprecedented deployment of thousands of National Guard personnel to Chicago, the country's third-largest city, prompting vocal pushback from Democrats there.

As for Baltimore, "if Wes Moore needs help, like Gavin Newscum did in L.A., I will send in the 'troops,' which is being done in nearby DC, and quickly clean up the Crime," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, using a derogatory nickname.

Trump's feud with Moore, who is Black, appeared to escalate dramatically this week, with the governor assailing Trump's provocative suggestion of deploying troops in Maryland and Trump calling Moore "nasty".

Pakistan refuses to apologise for 1971 'atrocities' in Bangladesh

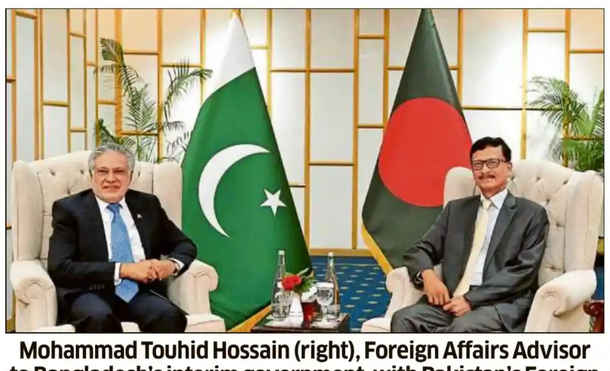
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The move by Muhammad Yunus' interim government in Dhaka to mend ties with Islamabad suffered a setback on Sunday as Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar refused to apologise for the genocide his country's armed forces carried out in Bangladesh — then East Pakistan — in 1971.

Dar, who flew from Islamabad to Dhaka on Saturday, said on Sunday that Pakistan and Bangladesh's outstanding issues arising from the 1971 Liberation War had been resolved twice — first in 1974 and then in July 2002.

His comment came even as Dhaka, despite being freshly keen to mend bilateral relations, has been pressing Islamabad to apologise for the Pakistan Army's atrocities in East Pakistan during the 1971 war that gave birth to Bangladesh.

Dar's comments were rejected by his counterpart in Bangladesh's interim government, Touhid Hossain, who told journalists he did not agree with them.



Mohammad Touhid Hossain (right), Foreign Affairs Advisor to Bangladesh's interim government, with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar during a meeting in Dhaka. AFP

New Delhi's relations with Dhaka came under stress after the Awami League regime in Bangladesh collapsed, and Sheikh Hasina, its prime minister since 2009, took refuge in India in August 2024 in wake of a mass protest against the brutal crackdown on students and youths who had been demanding an end to reservation in government recruitment.

Besides Bangladesh's anti-India campaign and a series of atrocities on the minority community, New Delhi has also been riled by the Yunus regime's attempts to mend ties with Islamabad, apparently prodded by China, which has been keen to expand its geopolitical influence in India's neighbourhood. Yunus even met Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif twice last year.

J-10 fighter jets from the Bayi aerobatic team of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force release coloured smoke during a flypast rehearsal in Beijing on Sunday, ahead of a military parade marking the 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two. REUTERS

N Korea tests air defence missiles

▶ North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has overseen the test-firing of two "new" air defence missiles, state media said Sunday, after Pyongyang accused Seoul of fomenting tensions at the border, reports AFP from Seoul.

The test-firing, which took place Saturday, showed that the two "improved" missile weapon systems had "superior combat capability", the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

The KCNA report did not explain the new missiles in any detail, only that their "operation and reaction mode is based on unique and special technology". It also did not say where the test had been carried out.

"The firing particularly proved that the technological features of two types of projectiles are very suitable for destroying various aerial targets," KCNA said.

On the same day, Kim also communicated an "important task" for the defence science sector to carry out before a key party meeting, the report said.

South Korea's military said Saturday it had fired warning shots at several North Korean soldiers who briefly crossed the heavily militarised border separating the two countries on Tuesday.

Teenager, man arrested over arson attack on Indian restaurant in London

LONDON, PTI

A 15-year-old boy and a 54-year-old man were arrested on suspicion of arson on Sunday after an Indian restaurant in east London went up in flames, seriously injuring five people.

The Metropolitan Police said officers were called to the Indian Aroma restaurant in Ilford on Friday night.

Three women and two men, believed to be diners at the eatery, suffered burn injuries and were treated at the scene by paramedics from the London Ambulance Service before being taken to the hospital. Two of them – a man and a woman – remain in a life-threatening condition, the police said.

"While we have made two arrests, our investigation continues at pace so we can piece together what happened on Friday evening," said Detective Chief Inspector Mark Rogers of the Met Police's Central Specialist Crime North unit. "I know the community members are concerned and shocked by this incident. I would urge anyone with any information or concerns to come forward and speak to police," he said.

The suspects have been arrested on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life, and remain in police custody. There was a large police presence in the Woodford Avenue, Gants Hill, area of the restaurant over the weekend.

"It is also believed there are two further victims who left the scene before officers arrived. Efforts remain ongoing to identify them," the police said.

The restaurant suffered extensive damage in the blaze, with neighbours recounting loud screams on Friday night. There are some reports of the CCTV footage showing a group of people wearing face coverings walking into the restaurant and pouring liquid on the floor before it was engulfed in flames.

CONSERVATION BID

Nepal officially joins India-led International Big Cat Alliance

KATHMANDU, PTI

Nepal has officially joined the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), an India-led global initiative to protect seven species of big cats.

IBCA is a multi-country, multi-agency coalition of over 90 big cat range countries and non-range countries with an interest in big cat conservation.

"Nepal has formally joined the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) by signing the Framework Agreement," announced the IBCA on Saturday.

"With snow leopard, tiger and common leopard in its landscape, Nepal's joining the IBCA will strengthen global collaboration for big cat conservation," the IBCA said.

The IBCA has "congratulated the Government of Nepal for this significant step towards shared ecologically significant step towards shared ecological security."

Nepal succeeded to almost triple its tiger population to 355 in 2022 (the latest census carried out so far) from a mere 121 in 2009.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) for global conservation of seven big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma on April 09, 2023, in Mysuru, Karnataka.

India has a long-standing experience on tiger agenda and exemplary conservation models for other big cats like lion, snow leopard and leopard.

With the help of this platform Big Cat Range Countries can share their experiences and mobilize resources in order to find solutions to conserve big cats.

A child, wearing a headdress, gestures at the Children's Day Parade, during Notting Hill Carnival, in London, Britain, on Sunday. REUTERS

Imperial calls the shots in Governor's Cup

HYDERABAD RESULTS

Ananth Vatsalay-trained Imperial, ridden by Ajeeth Kumar, won the Governor's Cup, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Sunday.

1. Bhupalpally Plate (Div I) - 1400M: Perception (G Naresh) 1; My Challenge (Gaurav Singh) 2; Catch The Worm (B R Kumar) 3; Sadiya (H M Akshay) 4; WB: Nk, 9, 2-3/4L; T: 1:27.33; TB: Robin Reddy; Fav: Perception.

2. Silver Phantom Plate - 1600M: Onslaught (R N Darshan) 1; La Quinta (Likith Appu) 2; Real Thalaivaa (Mohit Singh) 3; Konaseema (Ajeeth Kumar) 4; WB: 1/2, 1-1/2, 1-1/4L; T: 1:41.77; TB: Raja Shehzad; Fav: Pride Aside.

3. Bhupalpally Plate (Div II) - 1400M: Divine Secret (B R Kumar) 1; Elegant Lady (Rafique Sk) 2; Classical Music (H M Akshay) 3; Caraxes (R N Darshan) 4; NR: Smart Boy; WB: 7-3/4, 5, 6-3/4L; T: 1:28.95; TB: Hilton Sequeira; Fav: Divine Secret.

4. Hill Fort Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Shubhrak (Vikrant) 1; Most Beautiful (Akshay Kumar) 2; Aoi Si (Imran Chisty) 3; Battel On (Sai Kumar) 4; WB: 2-1/4, 3/4, 1/2L; T: 1:15.58; TB: M F Ali Khan; Fav: Natu Natu.

5. B Marideshwara Rao Memorial Cup - 1200M: Star Forever (Sai Kumar) 1; Glorious Power (Akshay Kumar) 2; Warwick (Ajeeth Kumar) 3; Arion One (B R Kumar) 4; WB: 2-3/4, Nk, 1L; T: 1:13.10; TB: Prasad Raju; Fav: Star Forever.

6. Northern Dancer Plate - 1400M: N R I Ultrapower (Akshay Kumar) 1; Noble Heart (Kuldeep Singh) 2; N R I Sport (B R Kumar) 3; Armstrong (Deepak Singh) 4; WB: 2, 1-1/4, 1-1/4; T: 1:26.68; TB: Hilton Sequeira; Fav: Noble Heart.

7. Governor's Cup - 1200M: Imperia (Ajeeth Kumar) 1; Vivaldo (I Chisty) 2; Lashka (B R Kumar) 3; Darling's Boy (Ajay Kumar) 4; WB: 1-1/4, 1-1/4, 3L; T: 1:12.19; TB: Ananth Vatsaly; Fav: Decacorn.

8. Salar Jung Cup - 1100M: Dubai Touch (Ashhad Asbar) 1; High Heels (Gaurav Singh) 2; Exclusive Black (Imran Chisty) 3; Rolls Royce (Abhay Singh) 4; NR: Newfound Glory; WB: 1, 2, 1/2L; T: 1:06.92; TB: Nilesh Rawal; Fav: Dubai Touch.

9. Hill Fort Plate (Div II) - 1200M: Safala (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Cape May (Likith Appu) 2; Ilene (Deepak Singh) 3; Niloufer The Great (H M Akshay) 4; NR: Rare Vue; WB: 8-1/2, 7-1/4, 1/2L; T: 1:14.29; TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Safala.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 16w; 10, 15, 20p; Fc: Rs 73; Q: Rs 55; Shp: Rs 37; Thp: Rs 39; Tri: Rs 129 & 28; Ex: Rs 2,328 & 1,621.

II race: Rs 170w; Rs 24, 35, 56p; Fc: Rs 8,546; Q: Rs 775; Shp: Rs 114; Thp: Rs 106; Tri: Rs 37,642 & 16,132; Ex: Rs 62,086 (c/o).

III race: Rs 10w; 10, 14, 16p; Fc: Rs 33; Q: Rs 55; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 27; Tri: Rs 122 & 29; Ex: Rs 955 & 621.

IV race: Rs 725w; 70, 12, 13p; Fc: Rs 2,983; Q: Rs 804; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 9,508 & 5,433; Ex: Rs 68,307 (c/o).

V race: Rs 17w; 11, 14, 11p; Fc: Rs 69; Q: Rs 35; Shp: Rs 30; Thp: Rs 37; Tri: Rs 84 & 24; Ex: Rs 345 & 210.

VI race: Rs 20w; 12, 11, 36p; Fc: Rs 44; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 30; Thp: Rs 56; Tri: Rs 186 & 144; Ex: 319 & 131.

VII race: Rs 73w; 21, 35, 13p; Fc: Rs 2,102; Q: Rs 703; Shp: Rs 91; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 4,546 & 866; Ex: Rs 37,645 & 16,133.

VIII race: Rs 16w; 13, 16, 23p; Fc: Rs 55; Q: Rs 46; Shp: Rs 40; Thp: Rs 54; Tri: Rs 825 & 438; Ex: Rs 2,818 & 1,046.

IX race: Rs 21w; 13, 13, 12p; Fc: Rs 131; Q: Rs 70; Shp: Rs 41; Thp: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 296 & 97; Ex: Rs 6,781 & 3,487.

I jackpot: Rs 1,88,657 (1). **Runner-up:** Rs 80,853 (1). **II jackpot:** Rs 1,395 (115). **Runner-up:** Rs 151 (455). **I treble:** Rs 2,840 (c/o). **II treble:** Rs 2,905 (1). **III treble:** Rs 329 (19).

Chagall wins Dr SR Captain Salver

PUNE RESULTS

Chagall, ridden by Siddarth and trained by P Shroff, won the Dr S R Captain Salver over 1600 metres, the main event of the races here on Sunday.

Apline Star, ridden by A Paswan, finished second, while Singer Sargent (C Umesh up) was third.

1. So Perfect Plate - 1400M: Bohemian Rhapsody (Aditya Waydande) 1; Crystal Clear (Neeraj Rawal) 2; Golden Rule (Ramswarup) 3; Madison (N Jodha) 4; WB: 6-3/4, 3-1/4, 2-1/4L; T: 1:27.86; TB: H Daji; Fav: Bohemian Rhapsody.

2. Act In Time Plate - 1000M: Western Star (Aditya Waydande) 1; Midnight Express (Ramswarup) 2; Lord Eric (Trevor Patel) 3; Goddess Of Dawn (Yash Narredu) 4; WB: Hd, 6L, Shd; T: 57.71s; TB: N Lagad; Fav: Western Star.

3. Capitulate Plate - 2000M: Superstar (G Vivek) 1; Doctor Dolly (Sandesh) 2; Treat (Neeraj Rawal) 3; Kimiko (Antony Raj) 4; WB: 1/2, 1-1/2, 13-1/4L; T: 2:04.98; TB: Pesi Shroff; Fav: Superstar.

4. Pune Times Mirror Trophy - 1200M: Wings Of Fury (Trevor Patel) 1; Conjuere (Antony Raj) 2; All For Love (Yash Narredu) 3; Lucio (C Umesh) 4; Wb: 3/4, 3/4, 5-1/2L; T: 1:09.99; TB: Nirad Karanjawala; Fav:Wings Of Fury.

5. Nana Raghunath Salver - 1600M: Gunsmoke (Yash Narredu) 1; Star Romance (S G Prasad) 2; Gaint Gold (Aditya Waydande) 3; Looking Like A Wow (Ramswarup) 4; WB: 3/4, 1-1/2L, Lnk; T: 1:39.83; TB: Mallesh Narredu; Fav: Kings Gambit.

6. Dr S R Captain Salver - 1600M: Chagall (Siddarath) 1; Alpine Star (A Paswan) 2; Singer Sargent (C Umesh) 3; Ultimo (Ajinkya) 4; WB: 1-1/4, 3/4, 1-1/4; T: 1:38.46; TB: P Shroff; Fav: Pride's Prince.

7. Spark Of Gold Plate - 1200M: Zendaya (Sandesh) 1; Azure (Antony Raj) 2; Surrealist (G Vivek) 3; Mila (Trevor Patel) 4; WB: Nk, 2-1/4, 3-3/4L; T: 1:09.25; TB: Sanjay Kolse; Fav: Zendaya.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 17w; 10, 13, 31p; Fc: Rs 39; Q: Rs 31; Shp: Rs 23; Thp: Rs 44; Tri: Rs 255 & 164; Ex: Rs 837 & 230.

II race: Rs 20w; Rs 15, 10p; Fc: Rs 35; Q: Rs 27; Shp: Rs 26; Thp: Rs 28; Tri: Rs 45 & 19; Ex: Rs 71 & 53.

III race: Rs 17w; 10, 14p; Fc: Rs 31; Q: Rs 14; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 33; Tri: Rs 92 & 83; Ex: Rs 105 & 43.

IV race: Rs 18w; 10, 15, 15p; Fc: Rs 34; Q: Rs 31; Shp: Rs 30; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 84 & 35; Ex: Rs 1,495 & 961.

V race: Rs 37w; 15, 159, 25p; Fc: Rs 763; Q: Rs 1,838; Shp: Rs 935; Thp: Rs 45; Tri: Rs 52,788 (c/o); Ex: Rs 61,286 (c/o).

VI race: Rs 70w; 19, 22, 19p; Fc: Rs 853; Q: Rs 689; Shp: Rs 85; Thp: Rs 49; Tri: Rs 6,321 & 1,693; Ex: Rs 19,683 & 6,326.

VII race: Rs 21w; 14, 13, 18p; Fc: Rs 82; Q: Rs 41; Shp: Rs 49; Thp: Rs 73; Tri: Rs 175 & 70; Ex: Rs 382 & 147 .

Jackpot: Rs 1,357 (326).

Runner-up: Rs 205 (925).

Treble: Rs 268 (33)..

CRICKET RUN-RATE CONUNDRUM

Fair play? KSCA tests NRRR

The new formula claims to eliminate flaws in NRR used currently worldwide

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Run-rate calculations in cricket have long been controversial, with every system devised -- from Average Run Rate (ARR) to Most Productive Overs (MPO) to the currently used Net Run Rate (NRR) -- facing criticism. Each revision, meant to fix flaws, hasn't been immune to disputes. But then given the number of extraneous factors that influence a game's outcome, devising a flawless formula is nearly impossible.

A recent example came during the 2024 T20 World Cup. England, grouped with Australia, Scotland, Oman and Namibia, risked elimination after a washout with Scotland and a loss to Australia. Scotland's big wins gave them a stronger NRR, meaning England needed emphatic victories while Scotland only had to avoid a heavy defeat against Australia.

The situation escalated when Australia's Josh Hazlewood joked it might benefit his team to let Scotland progress. Though skipper Pat Cummins clarified, questions of ethics and fair play arose. In the end, England's big wins, despite Australia's narrow victory over Scotland, settled the issue, but had England missed qualification due to NRR, the fallout could have been massive.

NRR CONCEPT

	Net Run Rate	NRRR
Runs	✓	✓
Overs	✓	✓
Wickets	x	✓

Net run rate formula

$$\frac{\text{Total runs scored}}{\text{total overs played}} - \frac{\text{Total runs conceded}}{\text{Total overs bowled}}$$

- Wicket is a major parameter in a limited overs cricket
- VJD SYSTEM/ DLS METHOD: Both of them use overs and wickets to determine the revised target

NRRR* FORMULA

$$\text{RRR for team-1} = \frac{\text{Score of Team 1}}{100}\left[1 \frac{\text{Score of Team 2}}{\text{Par score of Team 2}}\right]$$

RRR for team-2 will be equal to -1*(RRR of team-1)

- The PAR score becomes the base here
- The par score would have taken the wickets and overs into consideration

NET RUN RATE VS NRRR

Triangular tournament (T20)

Match 1: Team-1 vs Team-2
Team-1 is all out for 80 runs. Team-2 wins in 10 overs but only by losing 0 wickets that is by scoring 81/9.

Match-2: Team-1 vs Team-3
Team-1 scores 155 runs and Team-3 just makes 110 runs in reply.

Match-3: Team-3 vs Team-2
Team-3 scored 145 runs and Team-2 gets all out for 110 runs.

Triangular tournament

	Net Run Rate	NRRR
Team 1	-0.4917	+0.3623
Team 2	0.7417	-0.2623
Team 3	-0.25	-0.100

Scenario: 20 over match, Team-1 - 80/10. In reply, Team-2 - 81/9 in 10 overs

	Team 1	Team 2	Difference
Net run rate	-4.10	+4.10	8.02
NRRR	-0.088	+0.088	0.176

As per NRR: If Team 1 has to make an attempt to come back in the tournament, it has to make up for a huge deficit of 8.02. Win margin required: NRR of 10.2 (nearly 200 runs)

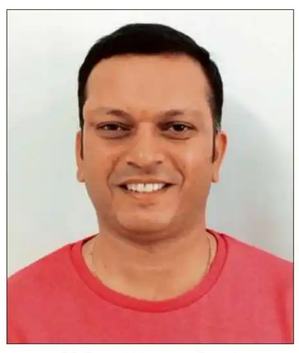
As per NRRR: If Team 1 has to make an attempt to come back in the tournament, it has to make up for a deficit of 0.176. Win margin required is 17 runs.

*Net Relative Run Rate

Two shortcomings

The NRR formula (runs per over scored minus runs per over conceded) has two major flaws. It ignores wickets lost while exaggerating margins. For example, a team scraping home with one wicket left can end with a higher NRR than a side winning with wickets to spare but using more overs. In tournaments where points are tied, such a vagary can unfairly decide a team's progression.

The DLS method, used in weather-affected matches, does factor in overs and wickets. While it is more sophisticated, it's not without drawbacks. Inspired by this, umpire Keshav Kolle and V Jayadevan (creator of the VJD method, which also takes wickets into consideration in revised targets, used in Indian domestic cricket) have come up with an alternative: Net Relative Run Rate (NRRR). Unlike NRR, NRRR factors wickets into the equation, claiming to produce more balanced outcomes. The Karnataka State Cricket Association recently tested it in the Maharani Trophy T20 (for women) and the positive feedback encouraged it to use the method in the ongoing Maharaja Trophy T20 in Mysuru.



V Jayadevan (top) and Keshav Kolle.

Keshav explains the flaw in NRR with an example.

"In a 20-over game, Team-1 is bowled out for 80. Team-2 wins with 81/9 in just 10 overs. Here, NRR gives Team-1 a huge deficit of -4.10 and Team-2 a +4.10," he tells *DH*. "This massive swing occurs even though Team-2's win was narrow. If this were a multi-team event, Team-1 would struggle to overturn the deficit, effectively being punished beyond proportion for a close loss. By contrast, NRRR uses DLS/ VJD par scores to incorporate wickets (see the formula). In this case, Team-2's par score after 10 overs with 9 wickets down would be 73. Scoring 81 means they are only 8 runs ahead, leading to modest ratings of -0.088 and +0.088. This makes the contest fairer by keeping Team-1 realistically in contention," feels the BCCI panel umpire.

Multilateral event

Keshav also highlights a triangular-tournament scenario. Suppose Team-1 loses narrowly to Team-2 but crushes Team-3. Team-2, despite only edging Team-1, then suffers a big defeat to Team-3. Logic suggests Team-1 should qualify with Team-3. Yet, under current NRR, Team-1's initial heavy penalty prevents recovery, allowing Team-2 to advance despite losing badly later. With NRRR, however, the adjusted values show Team-1 and Team-3 progressing, which aligns better with cricketing logic.

"Unlike traditional NRR, which creates extreme swings and nearly impossible deficits, NRRR keeps margins proportional and tournaments competitive," says Keshav

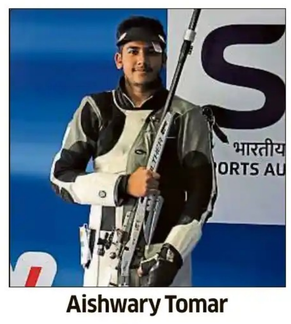
The core difference, according to Keshav, lies in the treatment of wickets. NRR bases its calculations solely on runs per over, so when a side collapses but wins quickly, the distortion is too significant to ignore. NRRR compares actual performance with the expected par score considering wickets, ensuring that close matches do not disproportionately punish or reward teams.

While no system can fully capture the complexities of cricket, NRRR appears a notable improvement over NRR, according to Keshav who is optimistic that with KSCA's backing and positive reception from franchises, he hopes NRRR will gain wider acceptance.

Aishwary nails dominant gold

Junior shooter Adriyan triumphs in 3 pistol

SHYMKENT (KAZAKHSTAN), PTI



Aishwary Tomar

Indian shooter Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar dished out a dominant show to win the gold medal in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions competition at the Asian Shooting Championship here on Sunday.

In the junior men's 3P event, Adriyan Karmakar claimed the gold medal with an Asian junior record of 463.8 in the final.

Aishwary shot 462.5 to finish on top. China's Wenyu Zhao won the silver medal with 462 points, while Japan's Naoya Okada claimed bronze with a score of 445.8.

Aishwary led the field for a major part of the competition.

The 24-year-old Olympian had an excellent outing in kneeling position and though he could not replicate that in prone, Aishwary did enough in the standing round to emerge winner after entering the final phase of the competition with a lead of more than 1.5 points.

The other Indian shooters in the fray, Chain Singh finished fourth, while Akhil Sheoran ended fifth in the final.

Earlier, the Indian trio of Aishwary, Chain Singh and Sheoran bagged silver medal in the 50 metre rifle 3 positions team event.

Aishwary was placed third in the qualification with a total of 584.

This was Aishwary's second Asian title in the same event, having won a gold in 2023 as well. However, he had to settle for the silver medal after losing to compatriot Sheoran at the 2024 edition in Jakarta.

In the junior men's 3P, Vedant Waghmare was second in qualifying with a 582 and Adriyan took the eighth and final qualifying spot with a 576, while Sami Ullah Khan (575), Rohit Kanyan (575), Gaurav Desale (569) and Hitesh Srinivasan (564) all finished outside. The trio of Vedant, Adriyan and Rohit bagged the team gold with a combined tally of 1733.

Aditi at T-29 with one round to play

MISSISSAUGA (CANADA), PTI: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok carded a modest even par round of 71 on the third day of the Women's Open to sit tied 29th on the leaderboard.

The 27-year-old Aditi (71-69-71) now has a score of two under par at the Mississaugua Golf & Country Club. She made three birdies and as many bogeys in her third round.

On the fourth hole, Aditi dropped a shot and then made a birdie on the eighth. On the back nine, she dropped a shot on the 11th only to regain it on the 12th and then dropped one more on the 14th hole. A late birdie on the 17th helped her finish the day with an even par score.

Lack of games killing women's football?

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

Kickstart FC, winners of the Karnataka Women's League, celebrate with the trophy at the Bangalore Football Stadium on Sunday. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Kickstart FC have been crowned the Karnataka Women's League (KWL) champions. That is a sentence that has seen newspaper pages for seven years straight. The club has been spiralling upwards in a beautiful virtuous circle. They have been almost invincible in the KWL. They have been impressive in phases in the Indian Women's League (IWL), finishing as runners-up in 2022-23. Three players from the club made the Indian squad for the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers.

While these are good signs for Karnataka football, the circle has not been so virtuous and missteps have dominated the conversations that have followed.

A single club winning the league for seven years straight might be a step forward from a dominance point of view, but it has sown questions of the lack of competitiveness and the talent in the state.

The numbers also demonstrate the extent to which they have dominated. In the ten matches Kickstart have featured in the KWL 2025-26, they have not only won all ten, but have dominated most of the games. They have also scored 10+ goals in two fixtures (12-0, 15-0).

While the supremacy seems to be a spectacle, nothing highlights the lack of competitive nature of the league better than this.

The cause of it, obviously, relates to the lack of focus on the grassroots and investing time in home grown talent, says Laxman Bhattarai, the CEO and Director of Football at Kickstart FC.

"Women's football in Karnataka, it is a plan in progress. There are a few good teams but I don't know the intention or vision behind them. The quality is not sustainable because of the grassroot programmes. We at KFC have 6-7 home grown players. And the results speak for themselves."

While a handful of teams have shown signs of improvement and a hope for the future at the KWL, the numbers do not have a very pretty viewing at the IWL.

Out of the eight editions played so far, teams from Karnataka, (only Kickstart FC) have managed to finish as runners-up, their best finish, only once.

"In Bengaluru, if you compare the IWL and the KWL, the quality is very, very low. There are only three to four teams who compete and the rest of the teams are just participating."

From a different perspective, things look bright. However, when you dig deep, the supply chain for the future is main talking point. Or is there a supply chain for talent in Karnataka?

"If you go to Manipur, Kolkata or Tamil Nadu, the kids are playing football from the age of 10. Whereas here (Karnataka), that focus isn't there. Especially for girls."

The Karnataka State Football Association (KSFA) needs to accept that women's football in the state isn't good enough. Certain initiatives -- be it with financial or structural -- maybe the way forward.

Furthermore, the obsession for overnight results -- love for plucking a flower before it fully blossoms also needs to stop. And for Karnataka, time seems to be running out.

Kickstart end on a high note

Kickstart FC dismantled Legends de Sporting Club 5-0 on Sunday to end their Karnataka Women's League campaign on a high at the Bangalore Football Stadium.

Results: Kickstart FC: 5 (Kiran Pisda 12th, Aarushi Santhosh 51st, 57th, Sheen Sharma 61st, Kajol D'Souza 63rd) bt Legends de Sporting: 0; Bengaluru FC: 3 (Ruthu Sreenandan 25th, Shubhangi Subba 61st, 65th) bt Roots FC: 1 (Rosy Thanga 35th). Pass FC: 8 (Amrita Sharma 40th, 43rd, 59th, Sushmita P 54th, Jyoti 62nd, K Asika 78th, 90+1st, Moirangthem Roshibina 85th) bt Maatru Pratishtana FC: Tara Anand (47th); Kemp FC: 8 (Rivka Ramji 10th, Nandini Bala 12th, 39th, Kushbu Saroj 17th, 43rd, Neha Mukati 57th, Aadira Ghosh 71st, Mandala Anusha 87th) bt United FC Kodagu: 1 (Chandam Anjali Devi 45th); Misaka United FC: 7 (Shruti Kumari 1st, 80th, Esther TingJoukim 24th, Sanfida Nongrum 27th, 83rd, Jyoti 29th, 85th) bt Pink Panther FC: 1 (Simran Gurung 32nd pen). **Special Awards:** Best Goalkeeper: Aishwarya A (Kickstart); **Best Defender:** Dhurga P (Kemp FC); **Best Midfielder:** Aarushi Santhosh (Kickstart); **Top Goal Scorer:** Kajol Dsouza (Kickstart); **Player of the Tournament:** Sanfida Nongrum (Misaka United FC); **Fair Play Award:** Roots FC.

Fulham hold Man United; Everton begin with a win

LONDON, AFP: Manchester United remain without a Premier League win this season after being held 1-1 at Fulham on Sunday, while a Jack Grealish-inspired Everton opened their new stadium with a 2-0 victory over Brighton.

Ruben Amorim's United were left to rue Bruno Fernandes' wayward first-half penalty as they were pegged back at Craven Cottage.

Rodrigo Muniz's own-goal put United in front on the hour mark, but Emile Smith Rowe came off the bench to rescue a point for Fulham.

Everton's new era got off to a bright start with a 2-0 win over Brighton in Liverpool.

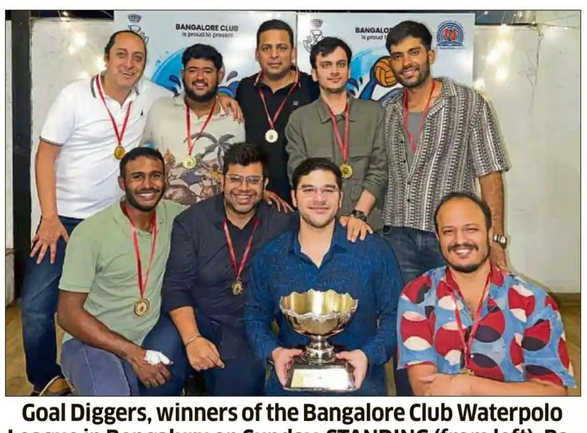
Nottingham Forest manager Nuno Espirito Santo insisted he wants to remain in charge after his side's 1-1 draw at Crystal Palace.

Results: Crystal Palace: 1 (Sarr 37th) drew with Nottingham Forest: 1 (Hudson-Odoi 57th); Everton: 2 (Ndiaye 23rd, Garner 52nd) bt Brighton: 0; Fulham: 1 (Smith-Rowe 73rd) drew with Manchester United: 1 (Muniz 58th-og).

Barca win thriller

Barcelona fought back from two goals down at newly-promoted Levante to win 3-2 on Saturday, while Atletico Madrid dropped more points from a winning position.

MAKING A SPLASH



Goal Diggers, winners of the Bangalore Club Waterpolo League in Bengaluru on Sunday. STANDING (from left): Rajnesh Kapoor, Vedanth MC, Varun Kumar, Arjun Malik and Prathik Harish. KNEELING: Sundar Adige, Jiten Thakkar (captain), Mohit Kukreja and Shantanu Kalambi.

(From left) Aakash KJ, Atharva Nawarange, Tanishka Kalbhairav and Himanshi Chowdhary pose with their spoils in Hospete on Sunday.

Aakash, Himanshi emerge champs

BENGALURU, DHNS: Aakash KJ and Himanshi Chowdhary emerged champions in the men's and women's singles categories respectively at the sixth State-ranking table tennis tournament that concluded in Hosapete on Sunday.

Aakash secured the men's singles title with a hard-fought win over Srikanth Kashyap, prevailing 11-5, 15-13, 13-11, 5-11, 6-11, 11-4 in a six-game battle.

Himanshi displayed composure in the women's singles final, defeating Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav 13-11, 11-9, 11-6, 1-11, 11-8 to claim the top honour.

In the youth section, Atharva Nawarange captured the boys' U-19 singles crown, beating Shubham Trivedi 11-8, 11-5, 12-10, 11-7. Tanishka Kalbhairav bounced back from her singles final loss to secure the girls' U-19 title with an 11-7, 11-4, 11-5, 11-8 victory over Raashi Rao.

In the U-17 finals on Saturday, Aarnav N and Shivani Mahendran posted contrasting wins to emerge champions in the boys' and girls' categories, respectively.

While Aarnav scored a hard-fought 11-5, 8-11, 5-11, 11-6, 11-6 win over Gaurav Gowda, Shivani beat Raashi V Rao 12-10, 11-9, 11-8.

Result (all finals): Men's singles: Aakash KJ bt Srikanth Kashyap 11-5, 15-13, 13-11, 5-11, 6-11, 11-4.
U-19: Atharva Nawarange bt Shubham Trivedi 11-8, 11-5, 12-10, 11-7.
U-17: Aarnav N bt Gaurav Gowda 11-5, 8-11, 5-11, 11-6, 11-6.
Women's Singles: Himanshi Chowdhary bt Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav 13-11, 11-9, 11-6, 1-11, 11-8.
U-19: Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav bt Raashi V Rao 11-7, 11-4, 11-5, 11-8.
U-17: Shivani Mahendran bt Raashi V Rao 12-10, 11-9, 11-8.
Team event: Canara Bank bt Winners Cloud TT Centre 3-0.

Gukesh takes on Firouzja

ST LOUIS (US), PTI: World champion D Gukesh has his task cut out when he takes on Alireza Firouzja of France while compatriot R Praggnanandhaa will meet Duda Jan-Krzysztof of Poland in the sixth round of the Sinquefield Cup here.

A rest day in high-level tournaments usually results in combative chess and past the half way stage both Pragg and Gukesh will not settle for anything less when the action resumes.

Local hero Fabiano Caruana leads the field on 3.5 points with two victories and three draws thus far and has been the pick among the 10 participants post the half way stage.

Praggnanandhaa is just a half a point behind on 3 with a lone victory over Gukesh in the first round followed by four back-to-back draws.

Also sharing the second spot is Levon Aronian while a pack of five players – American duo of Wesley So and Samuel Sevian, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Firouzja and Gukesh.

Sen, Sindhu face stern test at Worlds

PARIS, PTI

Lakshya Sen will face a daunting opener against top seed Shi Yu Qi, while former champion PV Sindhu will look to shake off a poor run as Indian shuttlers gear up for a stern test at the BWF World Championships beginning here on Monday.

It has been a tough year for India's leading players, with injuries and inconsistent form hampering their build-up. Sen, ranked 21, is returning to the French capital a year after the heartbreak of finishing fourth at the Olympics.

Lakshya Sen

Since then, the 24-year-old shuttler from Almora, who claimed a bronze at the 2021 edition, has struggled for results with a quarterfinal at the All England being his best show in 2024.

He has often faltered in tight matches against Li Shi Feng, Kodai Naraoka and Shi, who leads their head-to-head 3-1. The Chinese world No.1, in red-hot form with three Super 1000 titles this season, had beaten Sen in three games in Indonesia earlier this year.

In women's singles, Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist and 2019 world champion, will have to recover from the shock defeat against fellow Indian Unnati Hooda at the China Open.

The most accomplished Indian with five world championship medals, Sindhu will begin her campaign against Bulgaria's Kaloyana Nalbantova. Sindhu has endured a lean season, with a quarterfinal finish at the India Open her best result.

The ROCK in flamboyant line-up

Pujara may not have been the most stylish batter but his defiance won hearts all over

NEW DELHI, PTI

Cheteshwar Pujara never had a cover drive like Virat Kohli. Neither he took your breath away with a falling hook shot like Rishabh Pant nor did he play a short-arm pull with the finesse of Rohit Sharma that could send the fans into raptures.

But in the era of uber-stylish batters, Pujara was that glue that held the Indian batting together for a decade between 2013-14 till 2023 over a period of 100 plus Test matches.

His contribution to Indian cricket is not measured in sixes or strike-rates, but in time, grit, and unyielding defiance against the world's best attacks. If Kohli was the structure of the beautiful edifice that was Indian Test batting, Pujara was definitely the foundation. Those who swore by the virtue of patience that Test cricket always stood for, Pujara was that slice from the bygone days when T20 wasn't even an idea.

An obsessed father Arvind Pujara, a small time first-class cricketer with limited means but with big dreams, and a mother, who was a silent rock, made Pujara a man with a tunnel vision. He never knew the incorrect way of batting, which after the advent of T20 cricket is understandably termed as unconventional. Copybook cricket was like his second skin as father Arvind instilled in him that real cricket was Test cricket. In fact, the most unconventional character trait about Pujara was that he remained boringly conventional in his philosophy -- both in cricket and in life.

As his wife Puja in her book, "The Diary of a Cricketer's Wife: An Unusual Memoir" put it succinctly: "Cheteshwar Pujara is a man of few words and fewer expressions. If a smile can do the job, he prefers not to speak. If a sentence can end in three words, he will make no attempt to add another."

Hence he became that 'go to' man in the Indian squad, whom you would want on your side when you go to the war. When Kohli gave the charge, Pujara knew he had to nudge. And when Pant belted Aussie bowlers on a crooked surface, Pujara's mere presence at the other end and copping those eleven body blows on day five at the Gabba en route a 211-ball-56 was everything that he epitomised -- Man of Substance, Body of Steel and Runs of context.

In a team filled with flamboyance, Pujara's scars became his badge of honour.

For Pant's 'tour de force' act at Gabba, you needed a piece de resistance from Pujara. Through the 1980s and 90s, Rajkot for an average Indian fan was a venue where primarily one-dayers were held and the pitch used to be like a shirtfront helping a run-feast.

Cheteshwar PUJARA

TEST MATCHES		FIRST CLASS	
Mats	103	Mats	278
Runs	7,195	Runs	21,301
Avg	43.61	Avg	51.82
100s	19	100s	66
50s	35	50s	81

Most runs by Indians in all first-class cricket

S Gavaskar 25,834

S Tendulkar 25,396

R Dravid 23,794

VVS Laxman 19,730

Most runs at No. 3 in Tests

Batter	Runs	Avg	100s/50s
K Sangakkara (SL)	11,679	60.83	37/50
R Dravid (Ind)	10,524	52.88	28/50
R Ponting (Aus)	9,904	56.27	32/43
K Williamson (NZ)	8,658	57.72	31/34
H Amla (SA)	7,993	49.96	25/37
C Pujara (Ind)	**6,529**	**44.41**	**18/32**

Most Test wins for India

S Tendulkar	72 (63 in Asia, 9 outside Asia)
V Kohli	62 (46 in Asia, 16 outside Asia)
R Ashwin	61 (54 in Asia, 7 outside Asia)
C Pujara	**58 (44 in Asia, 14 outside Asia)**
R Dravid	56 (43 in Asia, 13 outside Asia

Most 100s by Indians in all first-class cricket

S Gavaskar	81
S Tendulkar	81
R Dravid	68
C Pujara	66
V Hazare	60

Most double hundreds in all first-class cricket

Batter	Double hundreds
D Bradman	37
W Hammond	36
EH Hendren	22
C Pujara	18

Compiled by **Arun Gopalakrishnan**

'He stood tall when the storm raged'

> Congratulations on a fantastic career! You have been a great ambassador of this wonderful game. We are all proud of all your achievements on the cricket field.
>
> **ANIL KUMBLE,** Former India captain

> His courage, grit and determination stood out and the body blows that he took in the Gabba Test we won against Australia symbolised Pujara the cricketer for me, willing to give everything he has for his country.
>
> **VVS LAXMAN,** Former India batter

NEW DELHI, PTI

Cheteshwar Pujara's retirement on Sunday evoked an outpouring of admiration from the cricketing fraternity with former teammates and coaches saluting his grit, determination and selflessness that defined his Test career.

Pujara, who played 103 Tests and scored 7195 runs at an average of 43.60, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, drawing curtains on a career that epitomised resilience in the longest format.

"He stood tall when the storm raged, he fought when hope was fading. Congratulations Pujji," India head coach Gautam Gambhir wrote on X.

Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh lauded Pujara's commitment to the national team.

"Someone who always put his mind, body and soul for the country! Many congratulations on an outstanding career Puji! See you on the other side!," wrote Yuvraj.

Former India batter VVS Laxman recalled the defining moment of Pujara's career, the series-clinching Test at the Gabba in 2021, when he endured several body blows.

"From the time I first saw Pujara and his potential, it was brilliant to see that potential translating into performance.

"His courage, grit and determination stood out and the body blows that he took in the Gabba Test we won against Australia symbolised Pujara the cricketer for me, willing to give everything he has for his country. Well done and wish you a happy and joyous second innings," Laxman wrote.

Anil Kumble, who coached India during part of Pujara's career, hailed him as a true ambassador of the game.

"Congratulations on a fantastic career! You have been a great ambassador of this wonderful game. We are all proud of all your achievements on the cricket field.

"You gave it your all for the team! It was a privilege to have worked with you and may you continue to shine in your second innings! Best wishes to you, Puja, Aditi and your Dad. Well Done!!," Kumble wrote.

Yuvaraj Singh

Pujara's long-time batting ally Ajinkya Rahane also paid a heartfelt tribute.

"Congratulations Pujji on a wonderful career. Loved every moment of playing alongside you and will always cherish our special Test wins together. Best wishes for the second innings!" Rahane said.

BCCI underlined Pujara's contribution to Indian cricket.

"Cheteshwar Pujara's career is a shining example of perseverance and selflessness. He personified the spirit of Test cricket. His ability to grind opposition attacks and his immense powers of concentration made him the bulwark of India's batting," BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia said.

"He showed that it was possible to succeed at the highest level while staying true to traditional values of the game. His commitment to Indian cricket, both at the international and domestic level, has been outstanding. We thank him for everything he has given to the game and to the country," he added.

Former India opener Virender Sehwag who also shared the dressing room with Pujara, also lavished praise on the champion batter.

"Congratulations on a fabulous test career Cheteshwar. Your grit, determination and hardwork was inspiring and you can be very proud of what you have achieved. Best wishes for a memorable second innings," Sehwag said.

Former India all-rounders Suresh Raina and Irfan Pathan also chimed in with tributes.

"Cheers to a legend! It's time to bid adieu to the incredible career of @cheteshwar_pujara You've given us countless memories," Raina said.

"Your grit has always spoken before your name. Big congratulations on a wonderful career. Your aggression was visible in your defence and you've made India proud, Pujji. Wishing you the best for second innings," Pathan said.

Sharath powers Mangaluru Dragons to the top of the table

BENGALURU, DHNS: Mangaluru Dragons topple the Bengaluru Blasters by 9 wickets to climb to the top of the table in the Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20 at the Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wadiyar Stadium on Sunday.

The Dragons' Shreyas Gopal (3/29) led the bowling attack in the first innings, helping contain the Blasters to 146/9 in 20 overs. In the second innings, Sharath BR (72 not out) and Lochan Gowda (55) combined to lead them to a comfortable win in 16.1 overs.

Brief Score: Bengaluru Blasters 146/9 in 20 overs (Shubhang Hegde 39, Suraj Ahuja 36, Vidyadhar Patil 25, Bhuvan Raju 25; Shreyas Gopal 3-29, Abhilash Shetty 2-27) lt to Mangaluru Dragons 147/1 in 16.1 overs (Sharath BR 72 n.o., Lochan Gowda 55). **Result:** MD won by 9 wkts.

Mysore Warriors: 180/6 in 20 overs (Su Karthik 53, Harshil Dharmani 37 n.o., Sagar Gowtham 30 n.o.) lt to Shivamogga Lions: 181/7 in 20 overs (Aneeshwar Gautham 49, Rohit Kumar K 46, Avinash D 45 n.o.; Prasidh Krishna 2-26, Muralidhara Venkatesh 3-23). **Result:** SL won by 3 wkts.

TENNIS

Sharapova honoured

Serena inducts Russian into the tennis' elite; Bryan bros also enter club

NEWPORT (US), AP

Serena Williams made a surprise — and early — appearance at the International Tennis Hall of Fame, emerging from behind the stage to introduce "former rival, former fan and forever friend" Maria Sharapova for her induction.

Williams, a 23-time Grand Slam champion who will be eligible for her own enshrinement in 2027, drew gasps and shrieks from the crowd at the Newport shrine.

"There are only a few players in my career who challenged me to be the very best, every single time we stepped out on the court," Williams said. "Maria Sharapova was one of them. Whenever I saw her name next to mine in the draw, I made sure I practiced harder."

"It's a gift to have someone who motivates you to reach those heights. And I'll forever be grateful for bringing out the best in me," Sharapova said in her acceptance speech.

Serena Williams (left) with one-time rival Maria Sharapova in Newport on Saturday. REUTERS

Raducanu advances

Emma Raducanu bagged her first US Open victory since her fairytale 2021 title triumph on Sunday with a straight sets demolition of Japanese qualifier Ena Shibahara.

The Briton was in complete control throughout the contest, breaking Shibahara's serve routinely on her way to a 6-1, 6-2 drubbing.

India A women crash to big defeat

BRISBANE, PTI: The Australia A top-order fired in unison after off-spinner Amy Edgar completed her five-wicket haul as the hosts defeated India A by six wickets on the final day of the one-off four-day game here on Sunday.

Edgar (5/57) claimed the scalp of VJ Joshitha in the second over of the day to get her fifer as India A folded for 286 in their second innings, setting the hosts a 281-run target.

Australia A's chase was anchored by half-centuries from Anika Learoyd (72) Rachel Trenaman (64) and Maddy Drake (68). They overhauled the target in 85.3 overs.

Opener Trenaman and skipper Tahlia Wilson (46) gave the hosts a flying start.

Brief scores: India A: 299 all out and (O/n: 260/8) 286 all out in 81.overs overs (Shafali Verma 52, Tejal Hasabnis 39, Raghavi Bist 86; Georgia Prestwidge 3-47, Amy Edgar 5-57) lt to Australia A: 305 and 283/4 in 85.3 overs (Rachel Trenaman 64, Tahlia Wilson 46, Maddy Drake 68, Anika Learoyd 72; Saima Thakor 2-63). **Result:** India A lost by 6 wkts. **Series:** India A lost series 1-0.

K'taka girls race to relay gold

BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka 400m relay runners produced their second gold medal as the state ended the National Inter-State Athletics Championships with a haul of 11 medals in Chennai on Sunday.

Star quarter-miler MR Poovamma overtook three runners in the last lap, including Tamil Nadu's Vithya Ramraj, in a nail-biter. Her state-mate Priya Mohan played a crucial role as the youngster helped Karnataka recover at least two spots after Deekshitha Gowda started the relay. Disha Alige ran the crucial third lap.

Meanwhile, the men's 4x400m relay team brought home the bronze medal in a race dominated from the onset by race favourite Tamil Nadu.

High jumper Pallavi Patil and long jumper S Lokesh bagged silver medals for the state in their respective events.

Sreeshankar, Rohit win

Lokesh's best jump out of his six attempts was of 7.71m, which was dwarfed by former national record holder M Sreeshankar, who leapt 8.06 in his bid to qualify for the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo.

The Commonwealth Games silver medallist fell short of the direct qualification mark of 8.27 on the final day of the cut-off date for the big-ticket event.

The story may turn out to be similar for javelin thrower Rohit Yadav, who hurled the javelin to his personal best of 83.65m to win the gold. The effort didn't match the direct qualification mark of 85.50, but the points accumulated from the event may improve his rankings to the top 36.

Result: Men: 4x400m relay: Tamil Nadu, 3:07.53s, 1; Haryana, 3:07.69, 2; Karnataka 3:08.87, 3 **3000m steeplechase:** Balkishan (Har) 8:51.17s, 1; Shubham Bhandare (Mah) 8:51.77, 2; Sharuk Khan (UP) 8:52.29 **Javelin throw:** Rohit Yadav (UP) 83.65m, 1; Sachin Yadav (UP) 83.20, 2; Shivam Lohakare 80.20, 3. **Long jump:** M Sreeshankar (Ker) 8.06m, 1; S Lokesh (Kar) 7.71m, 2; Swaminathan R (TN) 7.70m, 3. **Best athlete:** Vishal TK (TN)
Women: 4x400m relay: Karnataka 3:38.29s, 1; Punjab 3:38.49, 2; Tamil Nadu 3:38.54, 3. **3000m steeplechase:** Ankita Dhyani (Utk) 9:44.83, 1; Ankita (Har) 10:20.89, 2; Anupriya M (TN) 10:36.81, 3 **High jump:** Gobika (TN) 1.80m, 1; Pallavi Patil (Kar) 1.73, 2; Jonika Pahal (Har) 1.73 **Heptathlon:** Anamika A (Ker) 5466 points, 1; Deepika S (TN) 5134, 2; Sonu Kumari (Har) 5053. **Best athlete:** Ankita (Utk).

(From left) Priya Mohan, Disha Alige, Deekshita Gowda and MR Poovamma pose with their gold medals after winning the women's 4x400m relay at the National Inter-State Athletics Championships in Chennai on Sunday.

Smarting Aussies salvage pride in style over Proteas

MACKAY (AUSTRALIA), AFP: Cameron Green slapped a 47-ball century with Travis Head and Mitchell Marsh also blasting tons as Australia crushed South Africa by 276 runs in a record-breaking third and final one-day international on Sunday in Mackay.

The hosts were playing for pride, down 2-0 in the series, and responded magnificently, posting an ominous 431-2 after opting to bat -- their highest ODI total on home soil.

They then dismissed the Proteas for 155 in the 25th over, with spinner Cooper Connolly taking 5-22.

Head was supreme in blazing 142 off 103 balls, ably supported by skipper Marsh (100 from 106). Their 250-run platform was Australia's highest ever opening partnership against the Proteas, bettering the 170 by Matthew Hayden and Adam Gilchrist in 2002.

Brief scores: Australia: 431/2 in 50 overs (Travid Head 142, Mitchell Marsh 100, Cameron Green 118 n.o., Alex Carey 50 n.o.) bt South Africa: 155 all out in 24.5 overs (Tony de Zorzi 33, Dewald Brevis 49; Xavier Bartlett 2-45, Sean Abbott 2-27, Cooper Connolly 5-22). **Result:** Australia won by 276 runs. **Series:** South Africa won 3-match series 2-1.

PoM: Travis Head. **PoS:** Keshav Maharaj.

More records shattered at Inter-District athletics

BENGALURU, DHNS

Hammer thrower Sachin, discus thrower Nagendra Annapp and long jumper Sinchana MS stole the limelight on day two of the Karnataka State Inter-District Junior and Under-23 Athletic Meet in Udupi on Sunday.

Results (only winners): Men: Under-23: 110m Hurdles: Krishik M (T'kuru) 14.72s. **400m:** Shrinath Ganapat (B'gavi) 48.14s. **1500m:** Korrapati (D'wad) NMR: 3:57.99. **Triple Jump:** Zafarkhan Mohammed (B'gavi) 14.55m. **Pole Vault:** Adithya Vedigammal Madhesan (B'luru) NMR: 4.20m. **Discus Throw:** Nagendra Annapp (DK) NMR: 52.77m. **Hammer Throw:** Sachin (Koppal) NMR: 61.39m. **Decathlon:** BS Sanath (DK) 5371 pts. **U-20: 110m Hurdles:** Sanjay Patil (B'gavi) 16.13s. **400m:** Nithin Gowda M (B'luru Riral) 48.00s. **1500m:** Ranganna Nayak (DK) NMR: 3:52.05. **3000m:** Darshan HK (C'galur) 9:33.80. **10000m:** Darshan B (DK) 48:10.01. **Triple Jump:** Mohammed Tabsheer (DK) 13.99m. **Pole Vault:** Shreyas Kulal (Udupi) 2.95m. **Discus Throw:** B Vishal Anvekar (Mys) 45.25m. **Hammer Throw:** Yashas Praveen K (UK) 61.65m. **Decathlon:** Rohit Chandraka (sh'gga) 5753 pts. **U-18: 110m Hurdles:** Chandan S (B'luru Rural) 14.64s. **400m:** Sayed Sabeer (D'wad) 48.60s. **Javelin Throw:** Rohit (Y'gir) 57.45m. **U-16: Long Jump:** Naveen Dhotre (DK) 4.53m. **Shot Put:** Amogh (Mys) 13.64m. **High Jump:** Rakesh Adhithya (B'luru) 1.66m. **IB Pent:** Nihal Karkera (DK) 3599 pts. **U-14: Triathlon:** Pranav S (DK) 1776 pts. **Women: U-23: 100m Hurdles:** Shreeya Rajesh (B'luru) 14.45s. **400m:** Manasa (Kodagu) 57.66s. **1500m:** Shreya M (DK) 5:12.69. **Long Jump:** Sinchana MS (DK) NMR: 6.02m. **Javelin Throw:** Shravya (Udupi) 41.76m. **Hammer Throw:** Nishel (DK) 40.01m. **U-20: 100m Hurdles:** Isha Elizabeth (B'luru) 15.40s. **400m:** Abhignya (Sh'gga) 58.49s. **1500m:** Vaishnavi Rawal (B'gavi) NMR: 4:32.93. **10000m:** Ambika (V'pura) 1:07:29.52. **Long Jump:** Varshitha C (B'luru) 5.83m. **Javelin Throw:** Disha (Bidar) 38.23m. **Hammer Throw:** Spruha Naik (B'gavi) 44.33m. **U-16: 600m IG Pent:** Chethana (B'luru) 3544 pts. **U-18: 100m Hurdles:** Sakshi Christina (DK) 15.18s. **1000m:** Nagini Nayak (DK) NMR: 2:51.52. **400m:** Athena (B'luru) 58.07s. **Long Jump:** Vaishnavi Gnaneswar (DK) 5.32m. **U-14: Triathlon:** Maanika 9Mys) 2370 pts.

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